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NOTHING like the International Legal Commission now sitting in London to inquire into the origins of the Reichstag fire has ever been known before. It is not a court, for it has no power to try anyone; it is an inquiry into an event of the greatest international importance and it is sitting because the German Government, which rode to power on the official story of the event, cannot be trusted to carry out a fair examination itself. As the inquiry proceeds the public will become aware of its significance; it has been necessary to keep silent until now about the witnesses (some of whom endanger their lives by coming here) and about the evidence which the German Government would like to suppress. The Commission has to examine written and verbal evidence about the conditions in the Reichstag on the night of the fire, about the movements of Torgler at the time it broke out, about the character and past associations of Van der Lubbe, who was arrested in the Reichstag itself, and about the authenticity of documents which suggest Nazi guilt, and which the Nazis naturally repudiate as fakes. The witnesses include men as respected and honourable as Dr. Breitscheid, the Reichstag leader of the Social Democrats, and Herr Grzesinski, the former Prussian Home Secretary and chief of the Berlin police. The membership of the Commission, composed of lawyers of high standing in France, the United States, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden and England, ensures that this evidence will be honestly and impartially sifted.

Dr. Dollfuss Shows His Hand

Dr. Dollfuss has now told us pretty plainly what he is driving at. His speech in Vienna on Monday was very carefully phrased, and he did not mention the horrid word Fascism. But Fascism, as we predicted in these columns last week, it is to be—a corporative, or guild, State on the Italian model, though with rather more mediaevalism and religion about it. Democracy, of course, has already gone; parliamentary government was suspended in Austria six months ago, and will not be restored. There remains the elimination of Marxism, which means the destruction of the Social Democratic and Communist parties, the existing Trade Unions, and the popular regime in Vienna. All this may perhaps be achieved by nicer methods than have been employed in Germany; on the other hand, it may not be such a kid-glove affair as Dr. Dollfuss hopes, on the assumption presumably that the Socialists will prefer extinction by him rather than by the Nazis. And what about the Nazis? They may be taken to represent about one-third of the Austrian people, and though they are temporarily suppressed they have all Hitler's Germany behind them. Hitler's Germany, biding its time and perhaps modifying its policy a little, might easily succeed in absorbing Dollfuss's Austria. Whether the Powers, or Mussolini in particular, will, or can, prevent that remains to be seen.

A New Government in Spain

Spain has now got its new Government—a Republican coalition of Radicals and other fractions of the Left, but with the Socialists excluded, under Señor Lerroux, Azaña's original Foreign Minister. But already the prophets are giving it a short life. The Azaña regime had become more and more unpopular with the bourgeoisie, despite—or perhaps because of—the good work that it had done, and naturally Socialism has been treated as the villain of the piece. But Señor Lerroux's programme is not very different from his predecessor's; the agrarian and social reforms and the campaign against religion are to be carried on, and it remains to be seen whether lost liberties will be restored so easily as some of the commentators of the Right assume. The extreme Right, monarchists or churchmen, are certainly not likely to be satisfied, and, indeed, they are clamouring for a dissolution of the present Parliament, which they maintain does not represent public opinion. Probably Señor Lerroux will stave this off for the present, and appeal to the country in December—unless his position is made untenable before then by his adversaries on the Left.

The U.S.A. and Cuba

The character and fate of the strangely mixed group which is attempting to maintain its hold on the government of Cuba alike remain uncertain. The only certainty is that the United States battleships, with their marines on board, will not be withdrawn until Washington and New York are satisfied that there is no immediate prospect of the Left Wing Trade Unions and the other revolutionary elements in the island being strong enough to overthrow the at present dominant section of the provisional government. This section has already indicated the extent to which it is submissive to American influence by declaring its intention to do all in its power to avoid repudiation of the foreign debts. As we explained here last week, Americans are using every possible resource of diplomacy and business pressure, now backed by the very evident threat of military force, to protect their investors' interests without resorting to violent intervention. But in its dealing with Cuba the United States has never before had to face a Labour movement so strong and so radical as the present Trade Unions in Cuba. It is no longer a question simply of playing the ins against the outs; the Cuban Trade Unions, or most of them, seem as uncompromisingly opposed both to local Conservatives and Liberals as they are to the "Yankee Imperialists." The latest reports from the island describe the continued growth of labour unrest while the tangle of negotiations, plots and counter-plots is going on in Havana. On this account American citizens are leaving their homes and taking refuge within reach of a United States destroyer.

King Feisal's Death

Few kings have had a more chequered career than Feisal of Iraq, who died suddenly in Switzerland last week. He passed his early years in Constantinople, learned soldiering in the Turkish army and later in his native Arabian desert, and sat for a time in the Ottoman Parliament. After the Shereefian House had turned against the Turks he shared in Allenby's victory in Palestine. In 1920 he was proclaimed King of Syria, and held his throne precariously for three or four months till the French drove him out. The next year the British Government, the Mandatory of Mesopotamia and its oil, found him another throne in Bagdad. Feisal showed himself an astute politician, who managed to keep in with Great Britain and to establish himself with the Iraqis; and his death at this moment may have serious consequences in the Middle East. His young son who succeeds him is reputed to be less Anglophile than his father. Whether that be so or not, he is certainly less experienced, and the dangers of intrigue and disorder in Iraq are obvious, especially with the Assyrian problem in the forefront of the situation. The bungling of that problem was not Feisal's fault, but rather Great Britain's; in resigning the mandate for Iraq, we could, and should, have made terms for safeguarding the minorities. But Feisal might have played an important part in settling the problem. Its settlement now will put the League of Nations to a severe test, and will call for honesty as well as firmness in the European Powers.

Vickers Explain

Though there is better copy to be found in the armaments industry than in any other it seldom finds its way into the press. It usually takes a big scandal to break the rule of silence. At the moment every one would like to know something about the case of Mr. A. V. Lander, the agent of Vickers-Armstrongs, who was expelled from Turkey. Mr. Lander, it is said, was charged with being over-active in collecting information for his firm. But we know nothing about the rights or wrongs of the matter and we should very much like a statement from Vickers-Armstrongs on that subject. Instead we suddenly find in the press an "official explanation" in which Vickers-Armstrongs explain things known to every one who has read *The Secret International*, which published a list of Vickers' activities, almost word for word as they are described in Vickers' own statement. The second half of this statement, headed "A Source of Misunderstanding," describes as extravagant assertions, allegations which, as far as we know, have never been made in any publication. No one has suggested that Vickers, Ltd., is associated with Bofers, the Swedish firm which is one of the post-war developments of Krupps, or that Vickers is associated with Skoda, the Czechoslovakian firm involved in the recent scandal in Rumania. Nor has there been any suggestion that Vickers are linked up with Schneiders, the great French armament firm. It is very odd that Vickers should think it necessary to make a public explanation in reply to non-existent charges when there are so many things we should really like them to explain.

Anglo-Russian Trade Negotiations

The Anglo-Russian trade discussions are at a standstill. The trouble is the desire of the British to insert in the new agreement the Ottawa clause by which State-aided imports which are held to interfere with Dominion imports can be cut off by the British Government at a minute's notice. No one so much objects to the British insistence on this clause as British traders with Russia, who need a certain degree of security if they are to do any business. The Russians also object; but they are not, it

seems, in a great hurry. The present situation does not suit them so badly. In the absence of any fixed agreement the balance of trading is easily in their favour. The most sensible solution would be to substitute a quota clause for the Ottawa clause, i.e., to guarantee in the case of some Russian products a quota from Russia, and lay it down that an embargo could be placed on Russian imports beyond that quota if they threatened Dominion or other imports. In the case of our timber imports, of which sixty-five or seventy per cent. come from Russia, we could probably guarantee as much as sixty per cent. to Russia without running any risk of affecting the Canadian or other timber importers.

The State of Trade

The trade returns for August show an improvement which is worth talking about, though they are far from warranting the belief that we are on the high road to "world recovery." In British exports and re-exports there was an increase of £1,126,000 as compared with July, and of more than £3¼ millions as compared with August of last year. Imports were £3 millions more than in July and nearly £3½ millions more than in August, 1932. The rise here is mainly in raw materials, which is a good sign, while imports of manufactured articles have declined considerably. Empire goods, especially foodstuffs, such as butter, bacon and oranges, have risen steeply, as was to be expected under our new tariff system. The blackest part of the picture is represented by cotton and coal; in those only the most fatuous optimists can imagine that our exports will ever recover their pre-war or pre-slump position. Nor, for our own part, do we feel much confidence about the recovery going very far in a number of other industries. Economic nationalism is growing apace, and it is ludicrous to pretend that its influence is countered by "the sound economic policy of the National Government." Whatever advantages there may be in a policy of tariff restrictions, the restoration of our exports to their old volume can hardly be one of them.

Wages and Prices

Meanwhile, higher prices with stationary or even reduced wages will be small comfort to a host of poor families. A lamentable instance of the depression of the standard of life may be seen at this moment in Suffolk, where the agricultural minimum wage is being cut from 30*s*. to 28*s*. a week. Mr. Shingfield, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, who is leading a campaign of protest, justly describes this reduction as a scandal. Bacon, meat, clothes, boots, he points out, are all costing more, and milk and greenstuffs are going up. In Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire, the wage stands at 30*s*., and poverty-stricken as the Suffolk farmers may be, we cannot believe that they are more than six per cent. worse off than their fellows in the neighbouring counties. Mr. Walter Elliot has won some fame with his projects of agricultural reform; if he and his Government want to clear themselves of the charge that they are not interested in the condition of the labourers, they had better turn their attention to the working of the Agricultural Wages Act. That Act was designed to prevent sweating on the farms. In fact it can be used, as we see, to give statutory sanction to sweating.

"CYNICAL, DISHONEST, AND DISHONOURABLE"

THE most innocent and simple-minded of journals, we are surprised to learn from the columns of the *English Review* (a lively little monthly with *Morning Post* opinions) that we are the designers of a Machiavellian plot, black as the bottomless pit and sinister as Bolshevik Russia. We are attempting, it seems, "to exploit the German situation in the interests of World Revolution, and to enlist on the side of the world revolutionaries the apostles of political liberty and humanitarianism." Not content with plotting to persuade Professor Gilbert Murray, Mr. Arthur Henderson, the Society of Friends and Mr. A. P. Herbert to join hands with the Communists, we have, it seems, the subtle notion of leading this country into war with Germany in order to bring about the world domination of Moscow. Our policy, says the *English Review*, is "cynical, dishonest and dishonourable."

"Come, come," as the gentleman said to the little boy who spat at him, "come, let us reason together." Let us consider the detailed counts in this surprising charge. First, we are accused of lying, and then of "cynically" admitting the lie. We suggested, that is, that the Communist plot on which Hitler rode to power was a fake, and later we published an article by Mr. Ernst Henri demonstrating the existence in Germany to-day of an underground Communist organisation which is an adaptation of "the old inner apparatus of the Communists." Where is the lie and where the cynical admission?

Briefly, the facts are these. The German Communist Party aimed, just as the Nazi Party aimed, at conquest of power through Parliament, and, since there was always a chance that it would be legally suppressed, it had in readiness an alternative underground organisation which has in the main stood the test since Hitler's triumph. It utterly repudiated, as Communists have always done, "conspiracy" tactics of outrage, arson and murder, and we do not know of any informed person who believes Göring's oddly self-incriminating story that he had in his hands when the Reichstag was burned documents proving that the Communists intended to burn it. As to the strength of the Communist Party before Hitler came to power, we find ourselves in agreement with the excellent Berlin correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, who points out, in an article on September 13th, that the evidence so far produced by the Nazis of a Communist "plot" is of a ludicrous character (consisting, as it does, largely of books, some of them published a generation ago and openly sold in the world's bookshops), and who argues that, as a result of the inept tactics of the German Communist Party and of discouragement from Moscow (which has long been afraid of a German revolution when it was in no condition to help), "no serious danger from Communism has existed in Germany since 1924." Where then, except in the imagination of the *English Review*, is the lie or the admission of a lie?

Lest the misunderstanding should go any farther, let us explain that we published Mr. Henri's articles not because we wished to persuade people of the wisdom of violence or of Communism, but because the existence of an underground Communist organisation in Germany is a matter of first-class public importance which has received

little publicity in the daily press, where Communism is treated to-day much in the way in which sex was treated a generation ago—as an unclean thing which must never be rationally discussed, and which can only be mentioned in shocked whispers, or denounced in the pious phrases which denote ignorance and fear. The lesson which seemed to us to follow from Mr. Henri's articles was that Fascism in a highly developed country like Germany with a large industrial proletariat does not "end the class war," but intensifies it, that it does not settle any of the problems that make for social unrest, but, by its violence, makes inevitable a further violent revolution in the future. Because we hope that England will never find itself under a Government which cannot be displaced except by violence, we are anxious that people of good will in all parties should appreciate this lesson. The *English Review* itself deplores the lack of economic policy and constructive ability in the Nazi Government. We suggest that it would be absurd to expect to find either in that Government. The idealism that existed in the Nazi Party has never had, and could never have, a chance of fulfilment. The Nazis came to power with Socialist promises on their lips, and with funds supplied by Thyssen and the armament makers. They dare not even clear up the amazing scandal connected with the great estates in East Prussia. To-day the substance of power in Germany is in the hands of men like Göring, Roehm and Heines, who would be regarded in any other country as mere gangsters. We are reminded of the words of Burke, who, in speaking of men who climb to power by violence, wrote:

> You will be told, that if a measure is good, what have you to do with the character and views of those who bring it forward. But designing men never separate their plans from their interests; and, if you assist them in their schemes, you will find the pretended good, in the end, thrown aside or perverted, and the interested object alone compassed, and that, perhaps, through your means. The power of bad men is no indifferent thing.

In the next place we are accused of "dishonesty" because we champion free speech and personal liberty when those who suffer from their deprivation are Communists who do not believe in freedom and who would deprive others of it if they had the chance. Where is the dishonesty? The fact that it is Communists, amongst others (who include the constitutional Social Democrats and the whole Jewish community), who are the victims of persecution, is no more a justification for the persecution than the intolerance of the Vatican was a justification for the infamies of Titus Oates. If men in responsible positions think so little of the value of free speech and of the democratic principles they profess that they discard them directly they seem likely to endanger their interests, is it any wonder if the dispossessed begin to think peaceful change impossible and drift towards violent philosophies? Once men are permitted to say, "Oh, those were only Communists," when the law is set aside and justice denied, once men justify the invention of an act like the burning of the Reichstag on the ground that it served to defeat Communism, then we shall be at the beginning of an epoch in which any means are thought justified by the end, an epoch in which law will count for nothing and liberty be lost. Are we not justified at such a moment in asking for justice even for Communists?

But the most remarkable of all the charges brought by our imaginative contemporary is that there is nothing we should "like better than to see a new European war," since we calculate that "the result would be to install the revolutionaries in power from Vladivostok to Madrid." As an example of our sinister manoeuvres the *English Review* even goes so far as to speak of our "urgent demands for the rearmament of Germany," now dropped in favour of bitter complaints about "German military formations whose existence" we were "denying a few months ago." In fact, of course, we have consistently urged that the only hope of peace was in general disarmament, which the compulsory disarmament of Germany had made practical politics; we have repeatedly urged that Germany could not remain an unarmed nation in an armed Europe, and that if this opportunity of disarmament were missed and Germany's legitimate grievances disregarded it would be too late to prevent a new race of arms and a new grouping of Powers leading to another 1914 situation. The event has overwhelmingly justified us. The post-war pacifism of Germany has given way to the militarism we prophesied; now it is here it must be faced. It is no less dangerous because it is born of Versailles and the follies of Allied policy since Versailles. How childishly lacking in realism are these "realists" who have laughed at the idealism of Geneva! Take the simple facts of German rearmament gathered together in, for instance, the first chapter of *Patriotism Ltd.*, the new pamphlet published by the Union of Democratic Control. What remedy has the *English Review* for this menace of a rearmed Germany? Going farther than Mr. Winston Churchill, it thanks God that the Disarmament Conference failed and that we have the Italian and French armies to fall back upon. No doubt it also thanks God for the new military and air defence conversations between France and Soviet Russia—conversations which take us directly back to the old Balance of Power which toppled over so spectacularly nineteen years ago. We know for certain where this Balance of Power and these military groupings lead. We know exactly what is the upshot of abandoning the League notion of joint security in favour of the Balance of Power. We are not yet quite sure that it is too late. After the Japanese example it is difficult to hope for a joint peace policy at Geneva, but possibly, now that the menace of German revenge is actually set before the eyes of our statesmen, we may yet see the rearmament of Germany, the attacks of Germany over the peaceful frontiers of her neighbours and the persecution of minorities brought up as menaces to world peace under Article 19 of the Covenant, and the beginning of a disarmament conference which might make general disarmament possible by establishing the strictest international control of all armament manufacture in Germany and elsewhere. That would be sane policy, though we are well aware that it would be no security of peace as long as Germany's legitimate grievances are disregarded and as long as the Hitler Government remains in power. In urging such an international policy to prevent German rearmament and to make possible disarmament in other countries, are we cynically advocating another war or trying to procure world revolution? Would it not be rather nearer the mark to say that those papers which oppose disarmament and favour the militarism now rampant in Germany are looking forward to another war—

their policy makes it inevitable—and cynically plotting to bring about that Communist revolution which seems to have little chance to-day, but which is admittedly the probable outcome of another war to end war?

THE PRESENT CONFUSION

III.—STATE CAPITALISM AND CAPITALIST PLANNING

NINETEENTH-CENTURY Capitalism was proud of being without a plan; for it held that all the required planning was done for it by an "invisible hand," with whose dispositions it would be blasphemy as well as folly to interfere. But to-day economic faith in Providence is at a discount, with little prospect of a return to the "golden standard" of the old trust in the virtues of the competitive principle. Accordingly, for some years past we have been hearing of a strange new economic type—the capitalist advocate of a planned economic system. These capitalist planners have been influenced in part by the great growth of trusts and combines, which claim to have established an ordered system of production over large tracts of industry, and partly by the example of the Socialist Five Year Plans in Russia. For, say the capitalist planners, if Socialism has a plan, why should not Capitalism have one too—and so both reap all the advantages of planning and stave off for ever the danger of a Socialist victory?

The first thing to observe about capitalist planning is that it involves a complete throwing over of all that part of the capitalist philosophy which the defenders of the system have hitherto put in the forefront of their argument. For, whereas every Socialist, pink or red, is by absolute necessity a planner, capitalist planning is a highly paradoxical idea. If private enterprise and competition are to be eliminated over the greater part of industry, as all Socialists urge, planning follows as a matter of course, as the only possible alternative method of economic regulation. If production is to be a public concern, the public must, through appropriate organs, decide how much of each kind of goods to produce, what prices to put upon them, what pay to accord to their producers, how much to set aside for capital accumulation, and how much to devote to immediate consumption. It must, in fact, regulate by means of a comprehensive plan all the vital matters which have in the past been settled by individual or group action and individual or group competition under "private enterprise." The capitalist planners now agree that these things, or most of them, must be regulated in accordance with a comprehensive plan; but they do not see why this should not be so done as to leave the ownership and management of most industries in private hands, and without any radical change in the distribution of incomes, such as Socialism always connotes.

But will Capitalism, which has in fact drawn its strength from leaving room for the free play of purely economic forces, continue to work at all when it is confined within the limiting conditions of an enforced general plan? As long as production is carried on by private enterprise, with private profit as the incentive to production, can the State, or any other authority, issue orders to the capitalist about what he is to produce or refrain from producing? Of course it can, up to a point; but can it without destroying the incentives and deterrents which alone have kept the capitalist system up to the scratch? What is to happen if the Plan decrees that the capitalist shall produce something the making of which will involve him in a loss? The State can doubtless, up to a point, deal with this difficulty by guaranteeing the capitalist's profits; but will not any such guarantee fatally destroy the incentive to efficient production, and so bring about a hopeless ossification of the capitalist system? What will happen is either this ossification, or a rapid transformation of the employer into a mere manager on behalf of the State—in other words, a development of Planned Capitalism into State Capitalism.

It does not, however, follow that State Capitalism is an impossible system. Its outstanding differences from Socialism are two, one superficial and one profound. The superficial difference is that it will probably go on using capitalist terminology of the old kind, dubbing men employers when they are really only managers, and calling joint stock companies what are really State concerns. The fundamental difference is that it will seek to preserve the existing class-divisions and inequalities of income, though these will have become grossly inappropriate to the conditions of the new economic system—for the capitalist shareholders and directors will have become simply functionless and superfluous when they are no longer even nominally responsible for directing the course of production and investment.

Can any system which involves this evident incongruity last? It will continue to be exposed to the same danger of generating slump out of boom as afflicts capitalist industry to-day, save to the extent to which it can reconcile itself to altering the distribution of income drastically in favour of the wage-earning class. If it fails to do this, it will go down to defeat at the hands of the depressed. But even if it does accomplish the miracle of making capitalists believe in high wages, will it not go down to defeat all the same? For will not the workers use the power which comes of high wages and full employment to bid the functionless classes above them get off their backs, and to insist on taking over the control of the economic system themselves?

There is one condition on which this might not happen—that the directing groups at the head of the planned State-capitalist system should be successful in hiding the incongruity of their economic arrangements by calling other elements in men's nature into play. If men can be made to feel more aggressively nationalist than class-conscious, they may be induced, in the name of the "National Idea" and the "Totalitarian State," to refrain from challenging the injustice of the economic order. This is the calculation on which Fascists and Nazis alike base their economic programmes. But I believe the Nationalist spirit can be raised to this pitch only if it can be made to feel itself constantly beset by a host of enemies—whether they be other nations around, or Jews and Marxists, suspect of internationalism, within the gates. As long as men are afraid, excited, kept up to a pitch of nationalistic fervour by rumours of war, pogroms, and ceaseless "Hymns of Hate," the trick may be successful; and its prolonged success by these means may avail to break civilisation in pieces. But there is in this sort of Nationalism no real permanence; it must either explode in destructive warfare, or begin before long to simmer down. And, when it does begin to cool, the economic factors will speedily reassert themselves, and the countries that have tried to keep them back will be faced again with the old dilemma; for they will have to choose between the wrecking of their incongruous system by economic failure, and its destruction by economic success.

There is, however, one qualification which must be introduced at this stage. A deficiency of widely diffused consuming power need not mean a slump in a country which is in a position to export a large proportion of its low-wage products without receiving equivalent imports; for it can then make up for its own lack of consuming power by some other country's greater abundance (provided, of course, that its capitalists are prepared to export enough capital to balance its excess of exports). But such a situation is essentially precarious; for it implies that other countries are prepared to accept an excess of imports, and have enough consuming power to do this without throwing a substantial number of their own producers out of work. That this is an unlikely supposition the prevalence of high tariffs in the countries with high wage-standards clearly shows; for these countries cannot keep up their own wages if they allow unrestricted competition of low-wage imports. Accordingly, the pursuit of the policy of export-dumping in order to offset a deficiency of domestic consuming power is bound to be self-destructive, if any substantial number of countries resort to it. It can lead only to the general victory

of an extreme Economic Nationalism which is incompatible with its lasting success.

That Economic Nationalism is incompatible with it is a point of the greatest importance; for it means that countries which follow a policy of Economic Nationalism must become, within the limits of their productive power, high-wage countries if they are to survive, because they will have to depend on the consuming power of their own home markets. Their ability to afford a high standard of living may be reduced by Economic Nationalism, which involves forgoing the advantages of the international division of labour. But out of their diminished resources, they will have to pay out a larger *proportion* in wages and other forms of widely diffused consuming power than if they were working within an international economic system of the nineteenth-century type. That is, fundamentally, why I hold that some sort of Socialist tendency is bound, in the long run, to assert itself within the Fascist or Nazi State, however thoroughly the rulers of such States may set themselves to extirpate the existing Socialist and Communist movements.

The case of the United States calls for separate consideration; for it seems to be approaching Economic Nationalism by a quite different road, with an attempt at the outset not to crush the working-class movement, but rather to insist on a rapid rise in wage-rates in order to secure as soon as possible an expansion of consuming power up to the limits of current productive capacity. If this can indeed be done, and the position held thereafter in moving equilibrium—for wages must go on advancing as productivity improves, and must be raised further to balance any tendency to decrease the total wages-bill through greater mechanisation of industry—then indeed the prospect of a stably revived system of State-controlled Capitalism is opened up. For it is doubtful if, under such conditions, the American working class will for some time to come even wish to supersede the capitalist system.

But is this vision at all likely to be realised? I doubt it. American business can be induced to accept drastic government control, and to raise wages, as long as it is in a bad way and is hoping for salvation at President Roosevelt's hands. For it realises that it cannot have one part of his policy without the others. But let President Roosevelt succeed in "reflating" the United States back to prosperity, and then we shall see! Will not the American business man, once the panic is over and his "confidence" restored, promptly throw over the controls to which he has submitted in the emergency, and joyously revert to the type of Capitalism which landed him in such a pickle in 1929? My feeling is that he will, and that American individualism still goes too deep to be eradicated at a single sweep of President Roosevelt's operating tool.

I hold then, that, while Capitalism can on certain conditions reflate itself back to a temporary and unstable prosperity, and while State-capitalist systems based on extreme Economic Nationalism may be successful in establishing themselves for a time, all these systems are bound to be precarious and evanescent, and to bring the world back to the fundamental problem of devising methods of economic government which will give it a more assured and better diffused prosperity. Is Socialism such a system? That is the question I shall ask, and try to answer, in my concluding article. And I shall ask, too, what are the prospects of the world actually turning to Socialism as a remedy for its disease.

G. D. H. COLE

A LONDON DIARY

MR. CHESTERTON has written somewhere that the art of sensational journalism consists in suddenly announcing "Death of Lord Jones" to a public which has never before heard of Lord Jones. Some of us, looking at the brilliant, studiously uninformative façade of the London posters would be very humbly glad if our press lords would occasionally make even this concession to our intelligence. What is particularly weighing on my mind at the moment is the persistent, confident, flamboyant use in London of what is known to the American newspaper world as the "teaser" poster. When Lord Jones, having—from the morning newspaper point of view—been "an unconscionable time a-dying"—finally passes expectedly away at 4.45 a.m., the early editions of the New York evening newspapers come out with posters saying simply "Lord Jones Dead." It is the incurably conservative habit of the London newspapers, however, to announce at the same juncture, "Well Known Peer Dies." And that is the teaser poster. When Lord Grey died, after everyone who might conceivably buy a paper had known for at least thirty-six hours that Lord Grey was dying, the *Evening Standard's* posters solemnly announced, "Famous Statesman Dead." The absurdity of the teasing poster was in this case made more obvious by neighbouring posters which did announce in so many words the "Death of Lord Grey," thus preventing anyone from buying the *Standard* in the expectation that perhaps, after all, it was Lord Hailsham, or Lord Cecil, or Lord Lloyd who had died. From a purely journalistic point of view I feel sure that the American theory is right; that if you announce an event on the posters, the whole of that section of the public which is interested in such events at all will be sufficiently interested to buy the paper and find out something more about it. The British theory—which in the unsophisticated days of American journalism prevailed in the United States too—is to suppose that the curiosity of the public is completely satisfied by learning the fact that Grey is dead, or that Dollfuss has made a sensational statement, or that Carnera has won. Even the British newspapers on occasion admit that knowledge of the final outcome of an event of general interest does not necessarily preclude the possibility of an interest in reading just how this outcome was arrived at. For example, when Mrs. Mollison reached Capetown on her flight from England, the posters quite frankly announced "AMY THERE." My guess is that the "teaser" habit comes from the sporting side of the newspaper; it is believed that if a man who has backed a horse in the 2.30 at Doncaster could learn from the poster whether his horse had won or not, he would not buy the paper. So the poster simply says "2.30 Result." Even in this case the theory is dubious, since people who have won money can always afford another penny to learn the details, while those who have lost ache to know whether it was only by a head that disaster befell them.

* * *

There are interesting new departures in the Autumn Talks programme of the B.B.C. The kernel, if one may so put it, comes at the end of the pamphlet. One night at the beginning of July listeners were surprised by a dramatic news presentation which took the place of the usual formal news bulletin. It is now announced that this experiment is to have a further trial; on Saturday evenings half an hour will be given to a programme embodying the "news-talk" as well as a commentary on the week's news. The bridge-player who merely wants to break off for a few minutes to know if anyone important is dead is to be satisfied by a short summary of "the outstanding events of the day, followed by a fuller presentation of them" and by the Sports Bulletin, to which, says the programme, "special time will be given since a number of listeners appear to be interested in no other aspect of human activities. The B.B.C. hopes that listeners will not grudge a half-hour devoted to news, and will welcome comment and criticism of the experiment."

* * *

How far this may be regarded as a tentative move towards the goal I have always desired—the formation of a B.B.C. news-service not dependent on the press agencies which cater for the special needs of the daily newspaper—I do not know. But the whole programme suggests a movement in that direction. The most noticeable feature of the new programme is the large number of "eye-witness" accounts. Professor Julian Huxley is making a special B.B.C. investigation

of various forms of scientific research; he is asking how far research is really related to human need, and he will, no doubt, tell us, incidentally, if money is being spent on any research whose results must be valueless or, worse, destructive to human life. Similarly Professor Scott-Watson is making a first-hand survey of British agriculture and Professor Hilton of English industry, while Mr. S. P. B. Mais is going to tell us from the United States what America looks like to a Modern Columbus, and Mr. Howard Marshall, who made such a resounding impression by his tour of British housing and British slums, is going to investigate the problem of the countryside under the title of "Vanishing England."

* * *

The "ye olde" disease is spreading in England. The latest additions that have come to my notice are "Ye olde filling station" and "Ye olde Tudor wireless shoppe."

* * *

The new king has been schooled for his high responsibilities. He was educated at Harrow, and while in England showed himself a keen motorist and incidentally enjoyed his first aeroplane flight in this country.—The *Times* on the successor to King Feisal.

* * *

Glasgow Town Council Meeting. Mr. T. A. Kerr (Labour): "The Scouts and the Boys' Brigade were very useful adjuncts to the Tory Party." Mr. E. Rosslyn Mitchell (Labour): "I only wish we had something like it in our party." Mr. Kerr: "That comes quite well from you, because we have never regarded you as anything else but an adjunct to the Tory Party." Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell: "Many thanks for your brotherly compliment."—*Glasgow Herald.*

* * *

Dictatorship was the subject of the sermon by the Rev. A. J. Talbot Easter at St. Paul's Church, Sheffield, last night. . . . Hitler was out for a clear straight path, and if we had such a dictator in Sheffield we should not have had the erection of the lions in the City Hall and then their removal, or the removal of the console, or the "ice-cream" stall, in the Town Hall Square.—*Sheffield Daily Telegraph.*

* * *

Vice-Admiral Evans, who is Commander-in-Chief Africa Station and Acting High Commissioner, has left Simon's Town (Cape Province) accompanied by a detachment of two hundred marines with three howitzer field guns, manned by bluejackets, for Bechuanaland, where he is to *arbitrate* in the dispute. The natives of the territory are peacefully disposed, and the dispatch of the marines as escort to Vice-Admiral Evans is considered here as a purely precautionary measure.—*Manchester Guardian.*

* * *

Through an error in transmission in the account in the *Times* of Monday of the parade of Hitler Youth at Nuremberg, it was stated that each of the boys wore a scout knife bearing the inscription "Love and Honour"; the inscription was "Blood and Honour"—*Times.*

* * *

The Parliamentary Secretary of the Department of Overseas Trade has a busy life, for one of his duties is to be a *commis-voyageur* on the grand scale. Last summer he went to Denmark and now he is in Finland, officially presiding over the "British Week." I cannot imagine a better form of advertisement for British products, especially when it is accompanied by visits from a British warship, a squadron of British flying boats, and the band of the Black Watch.—*Sunday Times.*

CRITIC

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN NAZI GERMANY

III.—COMMUNISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

IN my previous articles I set out to demonstrate the one fact—that Hitler's Germany is not the only Germany, that there exists in Germany a deliberately planned and growing revolutionary movement. The secret factory groups of the revolutionary workers, the illegal press, the revolutionary circles within the Storm Troops and the Stahlhelm, the incipient illegal Trade Unions—this is the beginning of a strong revolutionary opposition, a swelling explosive nucleus within the blown-out Hitlerite Totalitarian State. But now the question arises: What will be the character of this opposition? Who are the political leaders of the new underground Germany? It is clear that this question can very easily acquire a historic importance.

The impulse for this revolutionary organisation comes from the Communists. The factory groups, and almost the entire illegal press, are the work of the Communists. The apparatus of the Communists, trained and prepared for illegality for years, has remained approximately 80 per cent. intact despite the terror and the unheard of number of arrests. Even in such a rural and politically conservative district as Mecklenburg in North Germany—an area without large scale industry, comprising small towns and villages—70 per cent. of the former Communist branches are working again. As a matter of fact, the Nazi Terror could sweep away only a certain portion of the Communist apparatus—the lower Local Committees which were most familiar to the Nazis. As against this the middle organisations—the District Committees—were in the main conserved, and the leading body, the Central Committee, works on intact. Only a small proportion of this large body was arrested in the way, for instance, that Alfred Noll was recently surprised in a secret printing press in Erfurt and shot on the spot by the S.A. In the meantime, especially between May and August, the disorganised lower strata of the Communist organisation have also been replaced and reorganised, the cells in the factories and residential areas everywhere electing new leaderships from fresh forces. The daily arrests carried through by the G.S.P. (Geheime Staatspolizei—Secret Police) indeed make ever-fresh breaches in this organisation, but the pull of the new young forces is so strong and vigorous that it is being constantly reported the leaders must exert special energy in order to keep the members back from too dangerous activities. This also is a direct result of the "Totalitarian State." The incredible courage and self-sacrifice of these people, as well as their skill, is recognised by all in Germany, the Nazis not excepted. And in the atmosphere of the Totalitarian State just this element is winning a force of appeal, which the Communists in Germany have perhaps never had before. It is no accident that the police in Bavaria suddenly discover a secret Catholic organisation which calls itself "Catholic Communist Culture Association." No one would dare connect these two before, neither a Communist nor a Catholic. To-day both dare to do it. Hitler is forcing new elements among the workers, intelligentsia and lower middle classes, to co-operate in a united anti-Fascist front.

Meanwhile, what is happening in the Social Democratic Party, the former leader of the German Left? In this country almost nothing is known of what has remained of the S.P.D. and what role it plays inside Germany to-day, seven months after Hitler's seizure of power. The Social Democratic Party is split up into three parts. These are the *Liquidators*, the *Activists*, and the co-workers of the *United Front with the Communists*. The first and third groups are the most numerous, but it is perhaps only the second that can still be described as "Social Democratic" in the old, or the Second International, sense of the term.

The Liquidators are a large proportion of the former Social Democratic Party and Trade Union bureaucracy, which openly deserted and changed front between March and July. A very large number of the former Social Democratic State officials, burgomasters, organisation leaders and Trade Union functionaries, went directly over to the Nazis. This is especially true in the provinces (for example, Ehrenteit, the former leader of the Social Democrats and Trade Unions in Hamburg, and Kurt Baake, the one-time State Secretary to Ebert and Scheidemann, are now both Nazi Commissars). This section forms to-day, as was the case with the d'Aragona Socialists in Italy in their time, an integral part of Fascism. Another part vainly attempted to set up, with the permission of the Nazis, a new "German Socialism," a kind of Left Wing of Hitlerism. The masses of workers themselves are little represented amongst these elements. But a considerable proportion of the old upper strata of the German Social Democratic Party, who already for a long time have been closer to the middle classes than to the proletariat, has

for the present gone with these Liquidators. With them went the large mass of "Passivists"—the ordinary party members who renounced all political activities under Hitler. At best they form Skittle Clubs (Kegelvereine).

In sharp contrast to this stands the movement of the Activists, who wish to salvage the remnants of the Social Democratic Party and regenerate it on a "revolutionary" basis. These are above all the Socialist Youth, and the younger strata of party officials, who declared open revolt against the old leaders from, roughly, May onwards. It seems that this active new "Left" which has its representatives everywhere in the country, and which is also in touch with the Left Socialists in Switzerland and Austria, will occupy the major part of the S.P.D. apparatus, such as still remains. Their official platform is: final break with the whole of the old opportunist party policy of 1918–1933; sharpest repudiation of old "catastrophe" leaders such as Wels, Leipart, Stampfer, etc. (to-day the Prague Emigrant Group); decisive reorientation towards illegal revolutionary activity against Hitler. Up to the present it is not a question of any organised and co-ordinated movement, but of scattered individual groups which have spontaneously formed themselves on the ruins of the old organisation, and which frequently already publish their own papers, and are attempting to regather the old membership. These circles calculate on winning first some 2 to 5 per cent. of the old party members, particularly young workers, and, here and there, an older experienced official, for serious underground work. In Berlin, for example, this is being attempted by the Left Wing Group centring around Gregor Bienstock, which distributes leaflets attacking Wels and Leipart, but above all the Communists. A number of S.D. Activists in the Reich, principally drawn from the ranks of the former "Religious Socialists," have joined an organisation called "Red Storm Troops," developing a rather romantic illegal agitation; the proclamations of this organisation frequently open with the words, "The Red Leaders' Council has decided——," a characteristic influence of the new Nazi ideology with its orientation towards the youth and the middle class. A strong Nationalist note is also often to be found in the propaganda of these circles. In Berlin a section of the S.D. Youth, under the leadership of its own Executive, has left the official Youth Organisation and set up a new "Left" Organisation. In Thuringia and Central Germany the Left Wing Activists have everywhere founded new groups.

It is very possible that in the course of the next few months a new Social Democratic movement in Germany will arise out of these scattered groups and circles of Activists. It is even possible that in the future a union on an even broader basis will come about—a combination of this Left remnant of the S.D.P. with the Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei (the German I.L.P. led by Walcher and Fröhlich, which stood between the Social Democrats and the Communists, and has also preserved a few of its groups), together with the old Trotsky Communist opposition. Attempts in this direction have already been set on foot, especially on the part of the Trotskyists, who have raised the slogan for a "New Revolutionary Party." As a matter of fact, the political differences between these three organised groups outside the Communist Movement in Germany—the Social Democratic Activists, the S.A.P. and the Trotskyists—have now become negligible. Their common programme is that of a "total revolution" against Hitler, but not on Communist lines, nor in the direction of Soviet Russia, but with more of a bias towards bourgeois democracy. Such an amalgamation would be a logical consequence if only to set up a counterbalance against the powerful attraction of the active Communist bloc. A new illegal anti-Communist S.D.P. might easily arise in Germany already to-morrow. But, in any case, it will from the first suffer from an inner contradiction, a centrifugal drive in two opposite directions—towards Prague and towards Moscow.

Prague—the old official Wels-Stampfer leadership of the S.D.P. which has now formed a new Emigré Executive operating from Czechoslovakia—is to-day an abusive epithet among many Social Democratic workers of Germany. The new Social Democratic Activists apply the strongest terms to the old leaders (a leaflet issued by the Left in Berlin says: "Wels, Leipart and their like are done for. The day of the 'lesser evil' is over"). As a matter of fact, Prague has little to do with organising the new illegal movement in Germany. The circulation of the *Neue Vorwärts*, the organ of the Prague Group, is negligible. It is not forgiven these leaders that to the very last they co-operated with Hitler. (A typical example of this is the official circular of the Düsseldorf Sub-District of the S.D.P. issued immediately before the ban, which read: "Whoever receives a copy of the *Signal*—an illegal Communist newspaper—should throw it at once into the fire or hand it in at the nearest police station.") And still it is probable that a part of the new Social Democratic Activists—the leading strata—will later either directly or indirectly find their way to Prague, driven to this course by common opposition to the rising Communist pressure among the masses, by common democratic-republican ideology, and by the material and international weight of Prague (the Second International). This development has become the more easy because the Prague leaders have in the meantime also adopted officially a "revolutionary line." I believe that the story of the "Independent S.D.P." will be repeated—that "centrist" party formed during the war, which stood between Wels and the Communists and finally divided its membership between the two. For the greatest danger which will threaten both Prague and the Activists during the course of the whole period of the Hitler regime is the breakaway of the Socialist workers and its youth to the Communists.

This is the third development within the S.D. Party, a development which has set in with great rapidity within the limits imposed by the present conditions of illegality. The Communists systematically use the tremendous disillusionment of the S.D. workers with their leaders and with bourgeois democracy. The Central Committee of the Communists in June addressed an open letter to the Social Democratic workers proposing a united front in the day-to-day struggle against Fascist oppression, for common economic interest, and for political freedom. The Communists at the moment are on their guard against giving the word for armed uprising; up to now they are only calling the workers out for illegal partial struggles—to defend their daily interests, especially in the factories. And the United Front slogan is being realised in many forms, in common factory cells (groups of five), in the joint distribution of illegal material, in the common discussion groups, and very soon probably also in the new illegal Trade Unions. This movement is very strong in Berlin, where a large section of the S.D. youth have entered the United Front with the Communists, and where a powerful S.D. Group with a similar political line publishes its own paper, the *Rote Vorwärts* (Red Forward). In Hamburg, the Social Democrats and Reichsbannermen of whole districts in the dock area have joined the Communists. In the Rhineland a systematic and permanent co-operation has partially begun between the Social Democrats and the Communists.

The struggle for the hegemony over the German working-class movement—and therewith for leadership in the revolutionary fight against Hitler—is thus not ended; it has entered on a new stage. The Communists have far outstripped the Social Democrats in the Nazi State and will probably undermine them still further. But the rise of a new reformist Socialist movement with revived democratic tendencies, and with a leadership very slightly changed, is almost certain. The outcome of this new struggle will certainly depend upon Hitler in some degree. But for the most part it will be determined by the solution which is found to those quite new controversies which the Totalitarian State has placed before all enemies of the Nazi dictatorship—the controversies concerning the new strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle against Hitler. ERNST HENRI

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"A HEALTHY SPORTS NOTE"

A manufacturer of silencers writes to the "Times" regretting that many motorists prefer a car with "a healthy sports note."

So the snortings and roarings and ravings
That shatter our ear-drums and peace
Are not the mere price of our cravings
For a speed that must ever increase;
And it is not the mileage he measures
That the motoring sportsman enjoys,
But the simple barbarian pleasures
Of making a noise!

Would he plead that a complex impels him
To fashion this hell upon earth—
That a silencer hampers and quells him
In telling the world of his worth?
Is he moved by the itch of confession—
Is there something that whispers within
That his "Self" finds its fittest "expression"
In meaningless din?

Would he urge, do you think, "There are others
Who only exist when they're heard"?
Are the Black Shirts and Brown Shirts his brothers,
Vociferous, raucous, absurd?
When Winston paints Indians slitting,
At leisure, each Englishman's throat,
Can it be that he's only emitting
"A healthy sports note"?

When Aryans babble of Jewry,
When dictators or demagogues brawl
In words full of sound and of fury
That signify nothing at all,
I shall know that the maggot that bit them
Was that of the road-hogging crew—
And I wish to the Lord we could fit them
With silencers too!

MACFLECKNOE

THE REVOLT AGAINST TITHES

[*In this communication Captain Pitt-Rivers, who is one of the leading exponents of the case against Tithes, denounces the whole system, root and branch. We expect to publish a reply to Captain Pitt-Rivers next week.*—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Not since Hampden and Selden raised the standard of revolt against "ship money" and "tonnage and poundage" has there been such an outcry against unjust taxes, legally enforced, as there is now against tithes. Not for the first time, though far more insistently than ever before, farmers are challenging this legacy of Papal rule in England. They are asking on what principles of justice or of economics their bankrupt industry alone should be taxed for the nominal support of the wealthiest institutions in the country—the State Church and the Colleges of our ancient Universities, as well as for a number of "tithe-owning" individuals, who have rendered neither service nor capital in return for the dividends they claim.

Farmers are notoriously conservative in practice and in thought, and as long as a burden imposed upon them by law can be borne, they have been wont to shoulder it, sometimes grudgingly, but at any rate with resignation, because they have been told: "It has always been so since the time when Jacob vowed a vow, saying: 'If God will be with me and give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give one-tenth unto Thee.'" But the Divine reward accrued to Jacob the priest-patriarch, not to Esau the husbandman, who provided it.

Farmers throughout the heavily tithed lands of East Anglia, Kent and Wessex are bankrupt; their savings exhausted and their farms and the contents of their homes distrained upon and sold up. In the words of an old sixteenth-century doggerel:

Of their coarse daily Fare bereft,
Without a Crust themselves to nourish,
Must beg, or starve, or come to Parish.

While, despite the advertised "clemency" of the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty:

Deaf to Cries, to Pity slow,
The Vicar will no Mercy show;
He'll nothing hear; 'tis all meer Babble;
What, cheat the Church! Abominable!

Whenever in English history an organised protest against an intolerable and unjust tax or burden has been made by outraged men, conscious of the justice of their cause, that cause has been won. The justice of the tithepayers' cause is implicit in the Common Law principle of taxation ever since 1297, embodied in the Confirmation of Charters in the reign of Edward I, which asserted that "No aids, tasks and prises" should be taken by the Crown, but "by the assent of the Realm, and for the *common profit thereof*. Forasmuch as diverse people of our Realm are in fear that the aids and tasks which they have given to us beforetime of their own grant and goodwill might be turned to a bondage to them and their heirs."

No understanding of existing tithe legislation and of its effects upon agriculture is possible without a searching examination of its political, legal and economic history. True understanding of the present position is hopelessly prejudiced by interested and ill-informed propaganda, directed from every conceivable point of view.

The great urban public, generally indifferent to anything that concerns agriculture, except the price of the quartern loaf, and as ignorant about farming in England as about farming in the moon, are now showing as much hectic interest in the tithe question as they did in the question of the Reformed Prayer Book and the raging controversy about the Reservation of the Sacrament—because the Church is involved, and every prelate and parson scents danger. Books, newspaper articles and pamphlets are beginning to appear in embarrassing profusion—most of them well deserving Selden's description of sacerdotal apologia as "excellent instruments for the advancement of ignorance and laziness."

Meanwhile, the machinery of the law is being set in operation against recalcitrant or ruined farmers, often without any regard for the formalities of the very laws which are invoked. Farm implements, draught-horses and stock-in-trade are distrained upon, although this is illegal. When distraint sales yield too little for the claim, a second distress has been levied, which is also illegal. The ten days' notice of distraint required by the Act is frequently not given. This was recently judged illegal in the Divisional Court. Animals which "gain the land" and household furniture are distrained, although these are privileged. The formalities of "impounding" are not observed. Any show of resistance by farmers to these levies leads to prosecutions for "contempt of court" or for "unlawful assembly."

Nevertheless, resistance to the levy and to the whole system grows in strength and organisation. In Kent and East Anglia Tithepayers' Associations were formed to protest and agitate against the oppressive Tithe Act of 1925. In Wessex, a small local branch of the National Tithepayers' Association in South Wiltshire became during the early months of the year a Common Law Defence Association, extending its operations over four counties. At a meeting in Dorset in April, at which Mr. Middleton, chairman of the Tithe Committee of Queen Anne's Bounty, placed the Bounty's position before tithepayers for the first time in that august body's history, agriculturists and farmers journeyed from Northumberland, Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Essex, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire, to join with farmers in Dorset.

The organised protest against excessive tithe has, by a

logical and inevitable development, become a protest against the whole anachronistic system of tithing land and tithe collection, for the simple reason that any tithe at all has become excessive. No paltry and ineffective remission, such as is now being put forward as a solution, could possibly provide a remedy.

Nothing less than the extinguishment of tithe by merging it in the land out of which it issues, and to which it properly belongs, can ultimately satisfy hard-pressed cultivators. Yet in their latest report the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty confidently state: "The present Government, like the Government which preceded it, have stated definitely that they have no intention of introducing legislation affecting the liability to the payment of tithe."

This challenge is accepted, as it must be if English agriculture is to survive. It can survive only if the inequitable burdens in excessive tithe and taxation are removed before more land goes out of cultivation; meanwhile its badly needed tillers continue to swell the army of unemployed workers drawing Poor Relief. GEORGE PITT-RIVERS

Correspondence

THE FAILURE OF GERMAN COMMUNISM

SIR,—On September 9th there appeared in your journal an article entitled "The End of a Great Illusion." This is extremely typical of the attitude of mind of certain "intellectual" German Left Wing Socialists, and I should like to offer some comment.

I am not at pains to defend the attitude and policy of the Social Democratic leaders, but to oppose that of the German Communists, both before and since March 5th. If the former have been busy telling the world that no share of the responsibility for the events of the past months rests with them, the latter have been at pains to perpetrate the just as inaccurate legend that they alone are blameless. Public attention has been so occupied with the demise of Social Democracy that absolutely no consideration has been given to the part played by the Communists, apart from the assumption, shared by the writer of the article (despite his characterisation of one typical episode as "monstrous"), that they were right after all. But were they?

The Communists are the only party of significance who have not attempted the responsibility of power. Their tactics have been purely negative, directed simply towards the discrediting of the Republic and in particular of the S.P.D., who were driven into a defensive position on both flanks. To this end they entered into alliance with the Nazis, while from time to time making overtures of purely propaganda significance to the Socialists, tactics which they continue to pursue in Austria and in the Saar. They had no genuine desire to prevent the rise of National Socialism except during the very weeks preceding the elections, when they began to be afraid that the catastrophe, instead of being a bridge to a better world, might overwhelm the working class movement altogether. One must make a distinction in this respect between the rank and file of the workers and their leaders. It might have been possible to have secured co-operation between the former had it not been for the almost professional opposition of the latter.

Even from their own standpoint the German Communists have made no good showing. They should, according to their theories, have as a minority party, supported by the sympathising masses, led the class struggle, and in particular prepared the insurrection. The sympathy of the masses they at the crucial moment had. For one thing, their parliamentary strength was nearly as great as that of the Socialists; for another, as your writer himself admits, not only the Communist but also the Socialist workers were prepared to offer resistance and waited in vain for the command. Why, when the S.P.D. leadership was failing did the Communists not place themselves at the head of the workers? There are two reasons: first, that already cited, lack of conviction in the necessity for resisting Fascism; second, the no less important fact that the workers (Communist included) had not sufficient confidence in the Communist leaders. Thus it came about that although the Socialist leaders had lost contact with the feeling of the workers the latter were without alternative leadership. The Communist Party had its head turned both ways, and could not make up its mind whether Fascism was to be resisted at the source or whether from the débris of the Fascist debacle would arise, phoenix-like, the Communist State. One thing is certain. Whatever may arise from the débâcle, if it comes, will not be under the leadership of the former Communist, any more than of the former Socialist, leaders. JANET ROBINSON

Godstone, Surrey.

MILK MARKETING

SIR,—Your correspondent's article on this subject in your last issue is of great interest, and I am glad to see that he puts improvement and standardisation of the quality of milk as the first necessity in the programme for turning England into a milk-drinking country. This is the only way to secure the co-operation of the medical profession, and as a doctor dealing daily with the problems of diet in children, I would like to hear more of the "generalisations which are now completely out of date" mentioned in his plea for more help from my profession. There are still about 2,000 deaths annually from bovine tuberculosis, and double this number of children and adults are infected each year by tuberculous milk, with serious disease which is often fatal. Prof. Ledingham pointed out in 1930 that even certified milk had been responsible for epidemics of undulant fever and septic sore throat, while Prof. McIntosh and Dr. L. Whitby showed in 1931 that samples of pasteurised milk obtained from a large firm of dairymen with a most up-to-date pasteurising plant contained millions of organisms per cubic centimetre (the normal upper limit allowed for such milk being a mere 100,000 bacteria per cubic centimetre), and in certain instances more living bacteria were present in the milk after pasteurisation than before. The generalisation that no raw milk is safe appears to be as true to-day as ever. If the new Board can eradicate tuberculosis from the milk-producing cattle in this country, train the farmers to conduct milking with an aseptic ritual akin to that used in the operating theatre, with adequate and immediate chilling of the milk, and make pasteurisation a guaranteed efficient process rather than a means of preventing dirty milk from going obviously stale before use, then and not till then will we feel justified in urging raw milk as a beverage or as a food. Boiling all milk of whatever grade seems to be the only safe process at present and unfortunately boiled milk has not the same attraction for children on account of the taste. As a food milk is little affected by boiling and the vitamins destroyed in the process can be added to the dietary. "Drink more milk and boil it" is the only form of the slogan which I feel I can support in the present state of the milk industry. Is your correspondent in favour of this, or are my generalisations considered by him to be out of date? I should welcome most heartily his evidence that this is the case.

At the recent International Paediatric Congress in London children's physicians from all over the world spoke one after another of the dangers of milk in its raw state. The generalisations at this meeting were based upon the very latest knowledge. "Dried milk" appeared to many speakers to be the only solution of the problem—but that is another story. ALAN MONCRIEFF, M.D.

London, W.1.

THE PRESENT CONFUSION

SIR,—In his letter commenting on Mr. G. D. H. Cole's second article on the present economic position your correspondent Mr. A. W. Coleman makes the startling assertion that Mr. Cole "goes to the heart of the issue between the pseudo-science of economics and the new presentation which, many now believe, will ultimately merit the designation of a 'science' of economics." Presumably Mr. Coleman is himself one of these many stalwarts, and his notions on economics are therefore illuminating.

(1) "There is," he tells us, "an inherent and persistent shortage of consumer-income in relation to 'total' industrial costs." This is true, but, as Mr. E. F. M. Durbin so lucidly explains in his "Purchasing Power and the Trade Depression," it is technically impossible and quite unnecessary that consumer-income should cover all industrial costs. For example, if we add up the total industrial costs in producing, say, a loaf of bread, it is perfectly clear that the cost of the flour plus the total cost of the loaf (in which the flour is finally included) would result in a sum greater than the amount of consumer-income required to take the loaf off the market. The fallacy lies in including the early costs (already distributed as consumer-income) again at a later stage of production, when actually only the difference in

cost needs to be added to make up the total consumer-income necessary to take the finished article off the market.

(2) " Under any conditions, whether of boom or slump, these costs are incurred faster than incomes are distributed." This is impossible; every cost from the payer's point of view is an income from the receiver's point of view. When a payment is made purchasing power is merely transferred; it does not disappear. Purchasing power may be withheld from circulation by the recipient or destroyed when paid back in liquidation of a bank loan. The first symptom is called hoarding; the second is a characteristic of deflation. Neither points to an " inherent " shortage and neither would be cured by the scheme proposed by the new " scientific " economists.

(3) " Obviously, if the defect is inherent, the only remedy is non-repayable consumer credit." The term " non-repayable consumer credit " is contradictory. Credit must be repayable, otherwise it is not credit. The issue proposed is a consumer's dole. It means that the State is to use its power to authorise certain fortunate consumers to appropriate something, to the production of which they have not contributed. In other words, it is confiscation. Surely, on the grounds of justice alone, if the community is to wield such a power it must be for the common advantage and not for that of a new privileged class of consumers. Obviously, those who earned the least and needed the most would, under the system proposed, receive the smallest dole from the State.

Many current nostrums are based largely on moral and spiritual considerations and are not therefore capable of refutation on logical grounds alone; but the social credit scheme is based purely on technical arguments and if these can be proved false the whole system falls to the ground. That the literature of the movement consists of an astounding assortment of inadequate assumptions and half-baked ideas (all of which have appeared many times in the popular economic literature of the past) a critical examination of these writings will soon disclose to any discerning investigator. E. N. GLADDEN

10 Bypass Road,
Shoreham-by-Sea.

THE CONDITION OF RUSSIA

SIR,—We took exception to Mr. Muggeridge's statement that closed co-operatives had been abolished. In reply, he quotes a decree, which shows that they have *not* been abolished.

JOHN MAYNARD
ALFREDA MAYNARD

NEW SCOTLAND YARD AND AGENTS PROVOCATEURS

SIR,—" Critic " in the London Diary of your issue of April 8th last stated that he had been told that plain-clothes policemen were sent to Hyde Park in order that they might be importuned and then bring charges on matters resulting therefrom. On May 20th Mr. H. M. Howgran Graham in the capacity of secretary to New Scotland Yard wrote publicly to your paper and denied that this was done. He said there was not a vestige of truth in the story, which was without foundation. However, a case which was heard at Tower Bridge Police Court on the 30th ult. and reported in the *Evening Standard* of such date, seems to throw a strange light on such denial. According to the report this was a case in which a young man was charged with attempting to improperly assault a police constable (presumably in plain clothes) and convicted. The learned magistrate is reported to have said during the hearing:

> In this class of case I protest against the method of obtaining evidence which is sometimes used. While appreciating the difficulty of obtaining reliable testimony and the personal sacrifice of those obtaining it, it is in my opinion a sacrifice a police officer should not be required to make—that is, to invite and endure an insult of a gross character. I sincerely hope it will end.

The details of the case are obscure, but at first sight they appear to disclose the employment of a police agent provocateur in a type of case in which Scotland Yard has publicly denied his use. It would be absurd to use police agents provocateurs in South-East London (which must have been the venue of the case to which I have referred) and forbid their use in Hyde Park and the West End. No doubt most people supposed that Mr. Howgran Graham's denial covered the whole of London—or the whole country. The magistrate, however, seemed to be under no illusions at all. He evidently regarded the employment of a police constable for the purpose of provoking an " improper assault " as not at all unusual. If New Scotland Yard's denial in your issue of May 20th last is to be regarded seriously and to stand, surely some explanation is due from " the Yard " as to the happenings in South-East London referred to in this letter. If official statements on being tested are found wanting, what statements can be believed? G. W. R. THOMSON

Law Society's Hall,
Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

A THIRTEENTH REASON

SIR,—It is difficult to conceive that amongst the " twelve reasons " given against smoking, the evils of nicotine were not mentioned, and its omission from the refutation of Y. Y. can only be considered as evasive. If a smoke-laden breath is blown through a clean handkerchief a brown stain is left, which is widely held to be nicotine. To be sure pure nicotine is not brown, nor, indeed, visibly distinguishable from water, but it can hardly be held an advantage to be poisoned by an alkaloid even when contaminated.

Then observe the fingers of the confirmed smoker. The discoloured skin is accepted as evidence that the body permeated with this poison is driven to unusual measures for its removal. With an " unnatural " justice it appears to ordain that those fingers which were guilty of subserving the act of smoking shall undertake the onus of excretion.

The presence of such a morality within our very members is answer enough to one of a sensitive ethic, but if a mundane reply to the smoking question is required—cigars are costly, pipes become foul and cigarettes bespatter the carpet.

University College Hospital, W.C.1. W. A. H. RUSHTON

Miscellany

THE POET—G.K.C.*

" THERE is one sin—to call a green leaf grey," sang Chesterton in his youth. It is a sin of which he has never been guilty, whether writing as poet, novelist, essayist, satirist or politician. Wherever he looks he sees colour; whenever he writes, it is boldly with coloured chalks on coloured paper. When he looks at dust he sees " a gleam of blue, a glare of gold "; and if he sees grey at all, which he rarely does except as the evil fungus which is the face of King Philip in *Lepanto*, he sees it turned into a " living splendour " and " a crown of glory " by virtue of her who, for a caprice, has clad herself in grey. Mr. Chesterton's world is the natural world of colours which a child sees, or a poet, unless he be fallen on those sad times when, following the painters of the disillusionment, he discovers " values," because no longer have strong colours a positive value. He is as English as were the Pre-Raphaelite painters and poets, seeing things sharply and clearly; he knows the secret of the hedge, and the meaning of the deep-cut, white road. His words may sometimes have more colour than weight; but they always, even in his lightest poems, have shape. They have the direct appeal of speech, and the natural rhythm of good speech. When he writes of battle, he writes of the sword and the spear; and if smoke come in at all, it only comes to vanish in a sky on which it leaves no trace. Even his grey seas glitter, unlike the dun waters of our eastern and northern shores: all things and all people who are alive for him have action and therefore colour, and for him that ancient worm, the symbol of an inactive eternity, must " bite " not hold " his own accursed tail." His condemnation on the ruin of religion in the sixteenth century is that men smashed the gold and red and blue of the glass and " loaded yourselves with the lead," the grey lead, dead when divorced from its proud, predestinate task of displaying the glory of the windows—the lead that was turned into weapons to tumble men who believed in colour into the grey dust of death. Not that death

* Collected Poems. By G. K. Chesterton. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.

itself is grey for Chesterton; in that fine early poem *A Man and His Image*, the corpse is "blue in the moonlight"; and after the slaying of the chiefs, after the deaths of Eldred and Mark and Colan in *The Ballad of the White Horse*, when Alfred sees the "grey twilight," he sees too "a yellow star."

So when *The Wild Knight* was published in 1900, it had a mixed reception from the young men whom I then knew. We were used to the steel-grey of Lionel Johnson, to the plush-grey of Ernest Dowson, to the opium-grey of Arthur Symons: if we knew colour in our poets, it was the unnatural colours which clamoured under the sign of the Green Carnation—"green wine and crimson seas." For Francis Thompson demanded more from most of us than we were prepared to give—his red was the red of bitter sacrifice, not of glad battle; and lovely as were the silver and blue and red of Yeats, he had not then travelled out of the Celtic twilight; and even the heaven's embroidered cloths had not those simple colours which Chesterton afterwards made Alfred see in the coat of Mary, the colour that "was better than good news." This new poet, thirty-odd years ago, was a portent. He made free with the stuffs of liberty; he was radical and glad; he did not make a song out of sadness, he made the sad sing: and when he was sceptical, he was as sceptical of the scepticisms of the time as of its superstitions. Often for Chesterton his sense of the ridiculous has been sufficient; and under its impulse we have had some of the best ballades of our time, and many topical poems, some of which are in this book, though too many are in purely Homeric circulation.

It was the vigour and vitality of Chesterton's poems which were a shock to an age to which a Shropshire Lad had but recently sung of death and infidelity and self-murder. Here was a man who shouted that it was the poet's business to be rapturous about the roses, and cried that the lilies of virtue were tiger-lilies. He was alien from the weariness then the fashion:

> To me, like sudden laughter
> The stars are fresh and gay;
> The world is a daring fancy,
> And finished yesterday.

As he found all natural things fresh and exciting, as he could make a poem for the deep-sea fish, the donkey and the seeds; so he brought the same sense of wonder and excitement to man's work, and politics and religion. He looked at King's Cross Station:

> God! shall we ever honour what we are,
> And see one moment ere the age expire,
> The vision of men shouting and erect,
> Whirled by the shrieking steeds of flood and fire?
>
> Or must Fate act the same grey farce again,
> And wait, till one, amid Time's wrecks and scars,
> Speaks to a ruin here, "What poet-race
> Shot such cyclopean arches at the stars?"

A happy Radical—he is half French, and the radicals are commonly more cheerful in France than in England, at least in the nineteenth-century England when they took their doctrine with water—he cried to a friend to rejoice in their day, for they have seen "God and the good Republic come riding back in arms." And as he found art and politics gay and gallant things, so too he found religion gallant and gay, and under his influence Swinburne's "pale Galilean" became definitely outmoded.

Vigour, vitality. And pace. Poetry, except in some poems of Mr. Kipling's, had become slow-moving, at the worst mincing, at the best dancing delicately and decoratively. Even in Mr. Kipling's poetry the pace is often more apparent than real: but Mr. Chesterton ran to his rhythm, and marched very swiftly to his metre. A poet with these gifts, and story-telling gifts, was bound to write narrative verse. In his first book there is *The Ballad of the Battle of Gibeon*: here was a new master:

> Then to our people spake the Deliverer,
> "Gibeon is high, yet a host may shiver her;
> Gibeon hath sent to me crying for pity,
> For the lords of the cities encompass the city
> With chariot and banner and bowman and lancer,
> And I swear by the living God I will answer.
> Gird you, O Israel, quiver and javelin,
> Shield and sword for the road we travel in;
> Verily, as I have promised, pay I
> Life unto Gibeon, death unto Ai."

In his second book of miscellaneous verse, which contains the lovely love-poems, some incomparable social and political pieces, there is that fine ballad *Lepanto*: between *The Wild Knight* and this book, however, we had had the songs of *The Flying Inn*, and the poet's masterpiece *The Ballad of the White Horse*. The story of King Alfred was the perfect subject for Mr. Chesterton—he is only extravagant over simple things, and Alfred's story has that startling simplicity which might provoke extravagance in very sober people. The poet's additions to the legend are singularly felicitous. He pictures the wars of Alfred as a war between Christian reason and pagan melancholy, that deep melancholy of the North which can only be assuaged by violence, the melancholy which dooms its deities to the gloom of Ragnarok. So Alfred, representing the England that is to be, summons to his aid the old forces of the England that has been—Eldred the Saxon, Mark the Roman, and Colan the Celt. Their characters have the simple distinction that should mark epic poetry. The Mark is particularly brilliant, and that soldier's wish before the battle anticipates more modestly the sentiment of a famous sonnet of Rupert Brooke's:

> "Dig for me where I die," he said,
> "If first or last I fall—
> Dead on the fell at the first charge,
> Or dead by Wantage wall;
> Lift not my head from bloody ground,
> Bear not my body home,
> For all the earth is Roman earth,
> And I shall die in Rome."

As a narrative the Ballad has swiftness, beauty, and a rare interior order. At moments there are digressions—but it is a poet who digresses. At moments the poet may be thinking the fashions and follies of his own time back into the past; but this will not trouble those who find a unity in history and believe that the ultimate error of scholarship is to speak of times past as "dead." The poet who carefully avoids anachronisms will never catch up with the truth.

I have but small space to speak of the other, later poems in this edition—which follows, so far as I have checked it, the order of the collected edition of 1927, though it omits two satirical pieces in that book, and includes one new and very entertaining satire. The book does not contain all Mr. Chesterton's poems; and it is a great pity that the arrangement of the 1927 book has been kept. The volume opens with a collection of some of his lightest, impromptu squibs, so that a reader unacquainted with his work would get a wholly incorrect idea of Mr. Chesterton's poetical weight. No one living, it is true, has written more forcible topical poems; but the best are found in *Poems* (1915) and *The Ballad of St. Barbara* (1922). Of the political poems, gay and grave, *Antichrist* (with the climax "Chuck it, Smith"), *The Secret People*, *The Song of the Wheels*, and the Ballades are known to all who know Chesterton's work at all; but I am not sure whether *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, distilling as it does his love for the people, his hate for the professional politician, is known as it should be:

> The men that worked for England,
> They have their graves at home:
> And bees and birds of England
> About the cross can roam.
>
> But they that fought for England,
> Following a falling star,
> Alas, alas, for England
> They have their graves afar.
>
> And they that rule in England,
> In stately conclave met,
> Alas, alas, for England
> They have no graves as yet.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS

MR. MAUGHAM'S NEW PLAY

YES, it is a comedy, but a comedy which borders upon drama and even upon religious drama. It begins in the saloon of a fashionable hairdresser's shop in Jermyn Street, and it ends with a dialogue between a hairdresser's assistant and Death. In Act I and II comedy predominates, but the drama lies in contrast between the spirit of Christian charity and what passes for the Christian religion in the world. Some of the humour is grim. You could not have a much bitterer joke than a young daughter clasping her pretty little hands in an agony of supplication and imploring, "Oh God, make father potty." But most of the humour lies in lines, revealing selfish snobbishness and genteel aspirations, and spoken by those who do not realise what they have betrayed. Here Mr. Maugham has always excelled.

In earlier days I would have expected that Mr. Somerset Maugham in treating such a theme would have written more out of his contempt for what he disliked than out of his sympathy for whatever contrasted with it. Contempt for human nature, and an indulgence towards it equally scornful, has hitherto been his strongest suit whenever he has deviated from comedy proper. The reason why that admirable play *For Services Rendered* did not hold the public for long (many enjoyed it and admired it—under protest) was that positive sympathy, as contrasted with satirical exposure, found in it no counterbalancing expression. For the discerning and tough-minded this did not detract from their response to the play, but there was no character in it on which the popular imagination could rest with complete satisfaction. Here, in this play, it is not so. The character in it which is most vividly conceived is "Sheppey" the barber, who is compact of natural kindliness and goodness. No qualities are more moving on the stage than these, but they are exceedingly difficult to handle without tipping over into sentiment. The dramatist must avoid showing that he is touched by them himself. Mr. Maugham has not sentimentalised Sheppey, even when his inexhaustible and spontaneous "charity" approaches the gospel ideal. Sheppey is not a saviour of souls; he cannot save the petty thief or the public-house tart. He is not interested in them because they have immortal souls, let alone as citizens, but because he cannot help liking them as they are, even when he wishes they were different. He is shocked by misery and unhappiness but he cannot be disgusted by human beings, whatever they do. As one of the characters remarks, Sheppey has no moral sense whatever. Galsworthy once drew such a character, Wellwyn in *The Pigeon*, which, to my mind, was one of his best pieces of work.

How does Mr. Maugham modulate from a fashionable hairdresser's shop to the theme of Christian charity? It is deftly done, and there are two points about the management of the transition which will excite the admiration of those who know anything about the playwright's craft.

First, the character of Sheppey, revealed to us while he is shaving customers and chatting with the other assistants, is (though at the time no such interest enters our heads) exactly the right soil out of which the flower of Christian charity might plausibly spring, granted some sudden opening, illumination or religious conversion—or whatever you like to call it—takes place. What made Sheppey the perfect barber, and the soul of the establishment he served, was his *humility*; that old-fashioned but important virtue, and the one, oddly enough, which often makes a man trust his intuitions against the judgment of the world. Without drawing our attention to it directly the playwright has suggested Sheppey's natural humility, by exhibiting his wholehearted devotion to his little job; and it was this quality which Mr. Richardson's admirable impersonation of every side of Sheppey's character, brought out so well. Not long ago we saw Mr. Richardson in *Wild Decembers* as the curate who wooed Charlotte Brontë—successfully at last. Once again he shows a rare understanding of human goodness, and a rare restraint in expressing it; Mr. Richardson is again a perfect interpreter of a dramatist's subtler intentions, and in a part, too, which requires a nice adjustment between humour and deep feeling.

The second point about Mr. Maugham's transition is the ingenious use of what may be described as "the red herring."

Two very important things happened to Sheppey that morning in Jermyn Street. He had had to attend the police court as the principal witness in the case of a man who stole an overcoat from a car; and while listening to his own and other cases he had been strangely upset. The criminals and outcasts of society are human beings like himself and as amiable as his customers! Hunger and misery had made them what they were; Sheppey is so disturbed by this discovery that he cannot help chatting about his amazement.

The second, is the news that he has won £8,500 in the Irish Sweepstake. When the curtain falls on the establishment drinking Sheppey's health in champagne, we are naturally left guessing how his luck is going to affect him. I must mention that he has brought in with him a woman from the public house opposite, with whom he had often had a little friendly talk, discovering now she is hungry and exhausted; and that when he and she are left alone together, he has a slight fit—probably the result of suppressed excitement. Well, how is his sweepstake luck going to affect him and the story? I do not suppose a single person in the theatre anticipated the actual consequences. I know several alternatives, each in Mr. Maugham's vein, occurred to me, and not one of them proved right: he might be paralysed by another stroke and his "luck" turn out a curse, or his wife, whom we had not seen, might be a tiresome silly woman who would destroy the contented life he had hitherto led by her pursuit of silly social ambitions, or she might be furiously jealous of the woman who brought him home that night; or again, the money might spoil Sheppey himself—in his middle-age he might turn vulgar-gay and rush to ruin.

But Act II shows Mrs. Sheppey to be charming, sensible, steady; and, gradually, it is disclosed that Sheppey's experience in the police court, together with his fit (probably this was accompanied by some strange spiritual illumination as with Dostoievsky), have together implanted in him a very different longing. He has forgotten his day-dreams of buying a nice little house and providing a slap-up wedding for his daughter, who is engaged to a pushful young schoolmaster in a county council school; he is resolved instead to give his money to all and sundry who clearly need it more than he does.

The conflict is not between husband and wife, but between Sheppey and the young couple, who see whisked away before their eyes the blessed chance of attaining the gentility they covet. Their dismay, their despair, are without bounds. No honeymoon trip to Paris for them; no marriage even perhaps for Sheppey's daughter (excellently played by Miss Angela Baddeley)—for she understands her Ernest, who conceals beneath the tags of a pretentious education and devotion to public service, the passions of a little arrivist. Ernest's arguments, and her violent clutch upon the money, make excellent comedy in contrast to Sheppey's buoyant insistence that the outcasts, the thief and the prostitute should come and live with them, and his determination (he only knows that this makes him happy) to scatter his fortune. Such a sudden conversion to the ethics of the New Testament must be madness! He has failed to redeem the thief—who steals from him or the prostitute—who runs off to the streets again, but these things matter not to Sheppey. He has obeyed his inmost impulse. If only the doctors would certify him! Mrs. Sheppey also is deeply perturbed, especially when her husband turns down an offer of a partnership in the hair-dressing business, which in old days he had coveted before all things. Her husband is certainly in a queer state. But when the doctors diagnose his case as one of religious paranoia she is dismayed. (Here Mr. Maugham indulges in some overcharged but effective satire of mental specialists.) Again we are left in doubt as to what will happen in the last act: a Strindberg ending of a loving woman fixing a strait-waistcoat on "the father" seems a possibility. But Sheppey is lucky to the last.

He is saved by death, and we from a painfully sardonic ending. He dies in a nap while his wife is out buying kippers for supper. There is a black-out, and the process of death is presented as a vision interrupted at one point by the reappearance of the thief. This dialogue is moving, but if death could have been a mere voice the effect would have been strengthened, and the confusion of one live figure and one subjective one being on the stage together, avoided.

Samuel Butler, looking back on the Christians who had surrounded him in his childhood, said that they would have been equally shocked by Christianity being denied or taken seriously. This state of mind is the theme of the play, and it is deftly and firmly handled, and admirably interpreted, too, from the minor characters up to Sheppey himself.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Tempest"

The important thing about *The Tempest*, the last production of Mr. Carroll's open-air season in Regent's Park, is the decoration, which is lavish, fantastic, and indefinably rococo. Davenant and Dryden's version has been called upon to provide masque and epilogue, and these are in the modernist sense "amusing" and tolerably well done. Father Neptune (Mr. Dennis Noble) roars with a comic pretentiousness through sea-grey whiskers, and the children from Italia Conti's and the Mayfair School of Dancing are wavelets and pieces of seaweed and goblins and nymphs in spritely succession. It is all mildly charming, and Sullivan's tuneful accompaniments are pleasant to listen to. Meanwhile, Shakespeare is not quite at ease. Whatever drawing power the name of Mr. John Drinkwater may have, his Prospero is insufficient. By playing the part on "straight" lines, he robs it of its mystery and strangeness, and his firm-jawed incisiveness makes Prospero's own self-portrait of an exiled bookworm ridiculous. Miss Margaretta Scott plays Miranda better than one ever imagined she could—she is an actress whose career will be worth following during the next few years. The comic relief is surprisingly good, especially Mr. Morris Harvey, and Mr. Robert Atkins is a good sound Caliban. Unfortunately rain made it impossible for one to judge how far this production of *The Tempest* will come up to the previous productions of *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *As You Like It*.

Operetta at Drury Lane

Vulgarity reigns supreme again at Drury Lane. Not the vulgarity of sugar and spice, for *Ball at the Savoy* is neither pretty-pretty nor daring, but the vulgarity of pointless luxury and spineless energy. The producer, Mr. Oscar Hammerstein, has struggled manfully with the wide open spaces of the Drury Lane stage, and some of his inventions are intriguing, but he has not managed to get into this indifferent story any of the sparkle of his own *Music in the Air*. Mr. Oscar Denes and Miss Rosy Barsony are equally matched for energy, and they have some tricks that would be amusing if they did not persist so long in them. There are one or two redeeming features. The chorus is the best of its kind for years: pretty, accomplished, and well-dressed. And the scenery by Joseph and Phil Harker is a great institution. Persisting unblushingly in the tradition of twenty-five years ago, it takes a real part in the play, and comes to the rescue more than once when there is nothing else worth looking at. The music is too lacking in character to be vulgar, but it would give a bad pain to Johann Strauss and Duke Ellington alike.

Starlight Before Eight

Dinner at Eight, at the Palace Theatre, has a cast of fourteen stars, and this alone presumably is enough to make it go with audiences who pay more than usual for their seats. Too many cooks, in this case, make not a bad broth. For a film produced without imagination and miscast in several particulars it goes very well. Marie Dressler, as an old warhorse of an actress who has her memories, is as pungent and commanding as ever. Several Barrymores make the most of "character" parts. Wallace Beery and Jean Harlow extract some real liveliness from vulgarity and riches. Hollywood certainly knows the trick of lifting a play and putting it on the screen without making it hopelessly stagey.

Melodrama of "The Trouble"

The world, like the stage, has its phases of melodrama—times when the "attitude" can never fail, when the individual with a little luck may dominate circumstance with a gesture. But was the year 1920 in Dublin such a time? The authors of *The Key* at the St. Martin's believe it was, and fling the threadbare cloak of an old, old plot over the cold hideousness of trench-coats, automatics and the terror of dark streets. But the cloak has been patched with more modern material. No longer does the heroine offer her charms to ransom her lover's life. Rather, the seducer must now foot the bill incurred in Act I by forging his general's signature in Act III in order to restore husband to erring but repentant wife, thus showing that the public-school code is not to be abandoned for a paltry three years' imprisonment. Yet *The Key* is not utter flim-flam. The atmosphere of frayed nerves and imminent murder is admirably presented. There are effective moments for Mr. Godfrey Tearle when he sits in a cellar awaiting an ugly and certain death. Miss Celia Johnston is prettily pathetic as his wife, but the plum of the evening is Mr. Arthur Sinclair's sinister humour, as a cunning Dublin lawyer, negotiating for an exchange of prisoners at Dublin Castle with a measured caution which is impressive as well as funny.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, September 15th—
Flower Show, National Rose Society, Horticultural Hall.

SUNDAY, September 17th—
Dr. Bernard Hollander on "Why Men Become Failures in Life," Conway Hall, 11.
Herr Victor Schiff on "The Reichstag Fire," Willoughby Hall, 1 Willoughby Road, Hampstead, 7.30.

MONDAY, September 18th—
"Twelfth Night," Old Vic.
"The House of Jealousy," Fortune Theatre.

TUESDAY, September 19th—
"As You Desire Me," Gate Theatre.
"A Sleeping Clergyman," Piccadilly Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, September 20th—
"Night's Candles," Queen's Theatre.

THURSDAY, September 21st—
"If Only Father . . ." Savoy Theatre.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IT is foolish to be disappointed in a book, since the author has made it according to his conception and his powers. "Such a little change here and a little there," one says, "would have made all the difference!" without realising the presence of a factor inhibiting such modifications. It is idle to expect juicy pears to grow upon the hawthorn stock whatever the promise of the blossom. But occasionally disappointment is so keen that one cannot help giving expression to it. That under which I am smarting at the moment is really rather flattering to Miss Helen Simpson, the author of *The Woman on the Beast* (Heinemann, 8*s.* 6*d.*), for this is the first of her books which I have read and the intensity of my feeling implies that she has aroused an admiration equal to it. The book consists of a prologue followed by three completely distinct long stories which are strung together on the single theme, hackneyed since the time of the Greeks, that the greatest evils are done from the highest motives. This is supposed, no doubt, to give a unity to the book, and the reader is presented with the stories as examples illustrating this not very surprising and remarkable truth. The author should have reflected that it is possible to connect *any* three stories in the whole of literature with some such generalisation, and to make it play the part of a slender *Bridge of St. Louis Rey* is absurd. Thus one's first complaint is that these stories would have been better unconnected. The second is that the book would have gained immensely if the last two had never been written. If Miss Simpson is to get any of the praise she deserves, we must consider the stories separately and throw out the bad ruthlessly before allowing her a single word of praise.

* * *

The last 150 pages which she calls Book III, *Australia*, 1999, give the reader one of the dreary "thrilling" romances of the future, derived from Mr. Wells, of which our age is so prolific. An American prophetess has converted the population of the world to her doctrines by exterminating all who resist them: only the Australians cling to the old religion and lead a nomadic existence in fleets of aeroplanes. The subject has something in common with that part of Huxley's *Brave New World* which deals with the surviving wild race of mankind who are still born from the womb, and the story is told with the same sentimentality, though it is even less original and less entertaining. It is magazine fodder and that's all there is to be said.

* * *

My reference to *The Bridge of St. Louis Rey* was not just a sneer in the dark. The second story—Book II, *France*, 1789, also 150 pages in length—has a touch of the Thornton Wilder quality and for other reasons also is to be condemned, but coming where it does we are slow to wake up to its defects. Briefly, these are that it is filled up with irrelevant local colour and historical matter from the French Revolution, and the author never gets to grips with her story at all. The characters are waxworks, whose expressions never change, and the story itself is feeble and unsatisfying and so poor that it would have needed an artist like Conrad to make anything of it. She begins well, but she shows us her scene from too many angles, the story wobbles, and, as our interest slackens, it becomes incredible. Moreover, her androgynous figure, St. Esprit, is never really made use of and remains an unimportant freak dwarfed by her surroundings.

* * *

I have now reduced the book to 182 pages, and these I shall find it difficult to praise as highly as I could wish. It is difficult, after this cold shower, to recapture the glowing enthusiasm with which I read them. Part I, *The Indies*, 1579, is a long story of the duel between an unbending lover of the truth, the Inquisador of the Portuguese colony at Goa, and the local Bishop and the Viceroy, who are more concerned with the material welfare of the colony. This is largely due to its possession of the bones of St. Thomas which attract multitudes of pilgrims. Unfortunately the Inquisador is well aware that the true bones of St. Thomas were miraculously translated to Edessa a thousand years before, and that the Goa relics are therefore fakes. As such he is determined to get rid of them and arranges to have their efficacy tested in public—and to burn them unless a miracle is forthcoming. The Viceroy arranges that one shall occur . . . the Inquisador is equally determined to prevent it. The three chief characters—Inquisador, Bishop and Viceroy—are alive; we do not see deep into them, but neither do we question their reality. Except for an occasional hint of diffuseness, the writing is good and often witty. But the great merit is the author's gusto in telling her story. She has seen it clearly and sweeps us along with her narrative. Moreover, the story is a thoroughly good one; the setting is new to us and we never question the accuracy of her knowledge. The best scene is undoubtedly the public testing of the bones, when a man is raised from the dead only to be confounded by the Inquisador who finds his description of hell is heretical.

* * *

But it is when we go back beyond the first of these stories to the Prologue that we find Miss Simpson at her best. Its quality is not new, but there has been only one other writer in English who has possessed it. Quotations, however, rather than comparisons, will best show the quality of Miss Simpson's wit:

> In a Western Kingdom, which he had usurped, an elderly ruler lay dying. He had adopted the Christian religion at the last moment, for the reason that men adopt children: because he had none of his own. He had spent six weeks very pleasantly in the intervals of pain, matching his wits against those of the young Saint, his evangelist. He had bargained well, gaining a little each day; and whereas the Saint had begun with the mere assurance that all past sins would be forgiven, though they would still have to be paid for, he had ended, such was his eagerness and the old King's skill, with the unconditional promise of an eternal crown. . . . The Saint was a Bishop, in the direct line of apostolic succession; that which he bound on earth was also bound in Heaven, and the arbiters felt that his thoughtless zeal had put them in a position of some delicacy. . . . The arbiter observed a tall young man striding towards him and knew that this was the Saint on whose account he had come.
>
> "Bishop Chilperic?" "None other," the Bishop replied, and stared somewhat haughtily. Then, observing that the light about the other's head owed nothing to the dying sun, he understood he was in the presence of a messenger. The arbiter blessed him, and without further enquiry came to the matter.
>
> "My son," said he, "is it a fact that you have conceded an eternal mansion to this pagan who now wears the crown of the West?" The Bishop admitted that this was so.
>
> "In that case," the arbiter continued, "I may tell you that we cannot in conscience ratify the concession. Setting aside the lesser aspects—the discontent which such a promotion would undoubtedly arouse among the Blessed—there is the larger question to be considered, that of the human attitude to virtue. Already, as a race, you look on her unfavourably. She is in the position of an unprepossessing virgin, with a large dowry, while her younger sister, vice, has every attraction but is portionless . . . if the heavenly riches are to be evened between these two, the elder sister may despair of suitors. . . ." "I have pledged the Infinite word that this King when he puts off flesh shall have an undying crown." "Heaven will not receive him," the arbiter warned. "Be it so," said the Bishop, and then, dropping his voice, "Are there no principalities in Hell?"

* * *

To those who know them, this passage may call up Richard Garnett's stories *The Twilight of the Gods*. The point I want to make is that this Prologue is as good as those stories, whereas *Australia*, 1999, is of as low a level as that of the ordinary magazine story of the future. Miss Simpson has great wit and can write well when she wants to. But she lacks the power of criticising her own work and has a tendency to let herself go. If her other admirers would join in a slashing attack on her, they might put her on her mettle and we should get something good. The stock can't be thorn, it must be quince, and there is no reason why any of the pears should be wooden.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Vanessa. By HUGH WALPOLE. *Macmillan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*
The Rash Act. By FORD MADOX FORD. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
About Levy. By ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The New Commandment. By PANTELEIMON ROMANOF. *Benn.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

In four sections, each considerably more voluminous than the average modern novel, Mr. Hugh Walpole has charted the progress of the Herries family from 1600 to 1932. At the end of *Vanessa*, the book with which he brings his chronicle up to date, is a map of "Borrowdale and surrounding country" and a genealogical table that, when unfolded, proves to be some three feet long. *Vanessa* itself, a work of 850 pages, teems with characters all more or less related, and, if not on speaking terms, acutely aware of one another's existence. The Herries were a clannish and sociable group; Mr. Walpole delights in their clannishness, just as he delights in the extent and numerous intricate ramifications of their family tree. The question arises whether he has not perhaps somewhat over-indulged his philoprogenitive instincts. Might not *Vanessa* be a more coherent, aesthetically a much more satisfying production, were its author's literary method somewhat less prolific of second and third cousins, uncles, grandmothers and old aunts, and were his protagonists occasionally allowed to forget their origins? Are human beings, we ask ourselves, quite so enamoured of their ancestral past as Mr. Walpole, in common with other modern novelists who have written family "chronicles," would like us to believe? Do they refer with quite such maddening insistence to their remote and romantic forbears of Volume One? But then, it must be admitted, we can few of us trace our descent from characters so uproariously and full-bloodedly picturesque as Rogue Herries, whose "wild blood" re-emerged in the personality of tough, two-fisted "Benjie" Herries, and Judith Paris, Vanessa's Gallic grandmother. In Benjie the Herries strain was rampant; to say that this impulsive, untamed, uncontrollable little adventurer bears a slight resemblance to other figures of the same kind, the erstwhile stock-in-trade of feminine fiction, would be to do Mr. Walpole an injustice. Though half-romantic dummy, Benjamin Herries is also half a real man. Vanessa, the great love of Benjie's life, whom he loses to that pathetic and brilliantly drawn prig, Sir Ellis Herries, is real enough and the true focus of the story. What I imagine the central theme of his leisurely narrative—the triangular pattern of Vanessa and Benjie and Ellis, the tragedy of deferred love and thwarted desire—Mr. Walpole might well have expounded in a shorter book.

Genealogy and map-making are a waste of spirit. Irrelevant, too—though often entertaining in effect—is the social scenery constructed by Mr. Walpole to mark the various stages of his heroine's progress. Historical personages, including Oscar Wilde—obviously not in very good form that afternoon—Lady Dorothy Neville and many others, make a brief or prolonged and elaborate bow; while a full quota of famous names is introduced. Quite in the *Cavalcade* grand manner are a glimpse of the Diamond Jubilee, echoes of Mafeking Night and a Homeric catalogue of celebrated guests who ascend the staircase at a packed and fashionable Edwardian ball. Magnificent, but not strictly to the point! How good, by comparison, is Mr. Walpole's plain and unadulterated story-telling—his account, for example, of poor Ellis's lunacy and of the two old ladies from Bournemouth who come to his rescue; or his story of Benjamin Herries' wretched marriage. Here Mr. Walpole displays his gifts; excursions into "fine writing," particularly apt to occur when he is on the subject of "Borrowdale and surrounding country," tend to show his romanticism at its least sophisticated. And Mr. Walpole, who is nothing if not exuberant, when he is sentimental plunges very deep indeed:

> . . . With the sunny mist, over the green flats, up the stony sides of the fells, above the glittering, chattering runnels of water, there was now thin shadow, now a breadth of light, all warm, kindly, beneficent; as a generous man's hand strokes his dog's shoulder, so God bent down from His cloud and caressed His world.

To turn from *Vanessa* to *The Rash Act* or *About Levy*, is like rolling from a soft and capacious feather bed, where every generation is a fresh eiderdown, and where the reader sinks back gratefully with every page, on to the hard, ascetic surface of a modernist couch. *Vanessa* may be diffuse, but it is always readable. Mr. Ford Madox Ford's prose style, in its own way, is very often just as diffuse and irrelevant as that of Mr. Walpole, but it is considerably less mollifying, since it makes no allowance for the slovenly and self-indulgent habits of the average reader. A "story" there is; but this story, even in its haziest outlines, can only be won at the cost of intellectual effort. On page 3 we learn that an American expatriate, who goes by the name of Henry Martin Aluin Smith, is contemplating suicide. Simple enough were the potential suicide not credited with the faculty of reviewing his entire past life, of fishing up from the subconscious all kinds of odd and painful memories: recollections of his father, the prosperous sugar-boiler; of Wanda, his Scandinavian mistress; of Alice, his wife, whom he suspected of having "gone Lesbian." . . . Henry Martin Smith is desperately miserable and also penniless; as it happens, he falls in with another Smith—this time an Englishman, Hugh Monckton Smith—who, though equally determined on suicide, is a man of great possessions. Monckton Smith, by the way, talks a jargon usually reserved for young exquisites in the novels of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse. . . . The *dénouement*, which is perhaps not the strongest point of Mr. Ford Madox Ford's picaresque story, it would be unfair to deprive of the support afforded by his allusive and extremely individual method. The Englishman shoots himself; the American, unmindful of Lesbian wife, implacable sugar-boiling parent and his own general failure to please, decides to postpone the rash attempt; and the novel, which, with all its shortcomings, is trenchant and vivid, is suddenly cut off like an interrupted gramophone.

As idiosyncratic and episodic, though somewhat more regular, is the narrative method employed by Mr. Arthur Calder-Marshall. Our impressions of Henry Martin Smith we deduce from the flickering backward-and-forwards movement of the suicide's unhappy reminiscences; and our portrait of Claude Levy, a suspected poisoner, on trial for his life, we derive, at second-hand, from conversations *About Levy*, from what a schoolmaster says, a man in a bar-parlour; from the gossip of an old woman who had known him when he was a boy; from his sister's reflections and from the thoughts of a woman who had been in love with him. Levy himself never appears. Even the question of his guilt we can decide only by inference; for Levy remains an enigmatic, rather mysterious focal point—a man who had attracted other men and women, but who had been understood by none. Were the public prepared to devote as much ingenuity to problems of this kind as it does to cross-word puzzles I should prophesy a great success for Mr. Calder-Marshall's arresting, curious and skilfully constructed book. Unfortunately, the problem of Claude Levy has little chance of attracting wide attention. The author's grasp of English is often slack—"she had dreamed" (he writes) "to be a witness with excitement"; when he means, presumably, that she had dreamed of being a witness—and his imagery chaotic or overstrained; but *About Levy* helps to stimulate the reader's intelligence, which is more than can be said of the average novel.

The New Commandment, by Panteleimon Romanof, is a much less entertaining book than its delightful predecessor, *Three Pairs of Silk Stockings*. Romanof's enchanting satirical gift is quite thrown away on this commonplace and rather long-winded love-story—a story, what is more, that seems to be based on an entirely false assumption. It was not the fact that Sergei was an enthusiastic and single-minded young Communist, while Ludmilla was a delicate product of bourgeois refinement, that brought their passionate relationship to an untimely end; their love came to grief—in Moscow, as it might have done in Berlin, London or Paris—because Ludmilla's emotional possessiveness conflicted with Sergei's desire for freedom; because Ludmilla demanded the whole, whereas Sergei was prepared to give her only a part, of his time and attention. Romanof, however, feels obliged to deduce a sociological lesson from the shipwreck of the young couple's married life. Ludmilla was a "bourgeois intellectual person"; and bourgeois intellectual young women, with a pretty taste in table napkins and new clothes, are apparently a source of endless trouble and bewilderment to sensitive stalwarts of the Five Year Plan, whom they alternately fascinate and repel. Sergei's character, and the peasant background against which he was brought up, are both studied by the novelist at great length. So deeply has the poison of bourgeois culture penetrated his once-orthodox system, that he is distressed—positively hurt—to see a male comrade playfully slap a female comrade on the behind as he passes by; a gesture, had he but known it, by no means restricted to right-thinking Communist circles. Altogether, the effect is a trifle naive; yet Romanof remains the only Soviet novelist, translated into English, whose books give an intelligible

and sympathetic picture of Communist life. Particularly interesting is his account of recent changes :

> This was a time when, after the hungry and difficult years of militant communism, life was beginning to enter peaceful channels . . . Those who were fighting for the new order, and who for several years running had led the stern existence of soldiers, were glad of a rest. . . . We too now had restaurants, stores, champagne, automobiles. All this was looked upon now not with indifference, as something natural, mere bourgeois comfort, as it had been regarded before, but as a supreme joy, which only the years of hunger had taught us to feel.

Ludmilla, who, in Western bourgeois society, would have been a tiresome, but unalarming, suburban vampire, in these surroundings gains an exaggerated importance. The chief danger of destroying life's amenities is that it gives them a value they would otherwise never possess.

PETER QUENNELL

MONEY PROBLEMS

Monetary Policy and the Depression. *Oxford University Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This book is a First Report on International Monetary Problems prepared by a Group under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. By the terms of reference it was restricted to an account of the nature of the monetary problems with which any International Conference would have to concern itself and of the nature of the various possible solutions to these problems which the Conference would have before it. In this preliminary survey the Group was not called upon to recommend solutions, and it can fairly claim to have sponsored an objective and balanced account of the principal elements in the situation. A survey of the immediate pre-depression period is followed by an analysis of the course of the depression and, after the issue has been thus defined, various proposals are examined from the theoretical point of view and in their practical setting. The skill of presentation characteristic of the whole report is most marked in the admirable chapter on theory.

The weakness of the report is the tendency to merge into one the two distinct problems associated in the Introduction, namely the alleviation of the present state of affairs and the better ordering of the world's monetary system. Expedients possibly appropriate to the situation in the first half of 1933 are treated as principles applicable to the normal working of the system. The secondary deflation induced by mismanagement of the first part of a depression is largely psychological in character, and when the report asserts that there is something like common agreement on the view that once panic and hoarding have set in steps must be taken to adopt a policy liberal enough to minimise the effects of the panic, this simply means that the problem may pass out of the field of logic into the realm of mumbo-jumbo, the existing state of affairs in the United States. In so far as a programme of public works, for example, operates to stimulate public confidence it is on the same level as a firework display. For the English-speaking peoples a thumping good murder trial might work wonders at this stage. Paradoxically enough, even the fantastic gyrations of a MacDonald, fatal in the early stages, might prove of benefit later on, particularly if they rendered the population too bewildered to become panic-stricken. Some people will feel very sick if it turns out that the sudden orders for uniforms, bunting, rubber truncheons and surgical necessities in Germany in the spring of 1933 constituted the turning point of the world depression.

This tendency in the report insensibly to narrow the issue to emergency measures weakens the final chapter, which in treating of the international problem is necessarily mainly occupied with consideration of the gold standard. No book on the depression should omit to rub in the fact of the war and to make it clear that, if people bawl for a knock-out blow and break the windows of anyone who suggests that it is time to call a halt, they will go on licking their economic wounds long after hostilities have ceased. In the case of the gold standard this entails pointing out that that respectable Victorian dame was deserted at the outbreak of war, and the fact that she was subsequently unable to support the illegitimate war babies spawned while she was cloistered is no proof that she cannot manage her own offspring.

Nor is the case against the gold standard strengthened by the argument about the increasing rigidity of the economic organisation, especially in the industrial countries. This argument is in effect a plea that the classes and areas which benefit most from a boom should be entitled to evade the consequences of the inevitable reaction. A very distorted picture of the economic system is presented by any account which concentrates on the years 1928 to 1933 and slurs over the preceding interval from 1914 onwards, when the rigidities worked all in favour of the vociferous sections of the population. When the report refers to the action supposedly taken by the French authorities after 1926 to prevent a large rise in domestic prices, it forgets that the French *rentier* or small-salaried man is not such a patient ass as his Anglo-Saxon confrère, and that when he feels he is being exploited he hastens to the Chamber of Deputies with a loaded stick to express his point of view. A table given in this report shows falls in agricultural prices between 1929 and 1931 of such magnitudes as 65 per cent. in Australian wheat, 60 per cent. in Brazilian coffee, and 54 per cent. in American cotton. In response to these movements, the industrial areas merely bleat about their rigidities and work them out in unemployment as if the overhead and prime costs of 1929 were sacrosanct. Of course, they are only rendered so by the encouragement and assistance of the State, which could speedily enforce flexibility by abandoning its impossible task of sheltering each industry and occupation in turn.

G. L. SCHWARTZ

THE FOREIGN OFFICE FAMILY

The Foreign Office. By SIR JOHN TILLEY and STEPHEN GASELEE. *Putnam.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This latest addition to a very useful series is a pleasant and disarming volume. If it adds very little to our knowledge of its subject, it contains a mass of agreeable anecdotage which gives it the air of an attractive autobiography. The university lecturer will find herein the kind of tale which always helps to preserve a lecture from dullness ; and there are some amusing stories eminently useful for an after-dinner speech on the lighter aspects of the public service.

But its pleasant persiflage does not really help us to understand the problems to which the Foreign Office gives rise. It is important, for instance, to know whether the narrow class from which it has generally been drawn does at all seriously affect its habits as a service. Certainly in my own days in the United States our Embassy, though socially the most attractive, was vastly ignorant of American politics and American life ; and I have heard much the same report of continental embassies by men whose views are entitled to the highest consideration. The proper functions of the political under-secretary, the relations with the Cabinet (upon which Mr. Lloyd George has recently made some remarkable comments), and with the House of Commons, the newer aspects of " propaganda," the technique of preparation for international conferences—upon all these important themes we are given either no information or next to none. There are famous anecdotes of Palmerston and Lord Salisbury, a description of the organisation of the department at different stages of its history, an admirable account of the range of its work ; but of the profounder issues little is said. Perhaps this could not be done by men one of whom served until the other day, while his colleague is still a member of the service. But in that case it would have been more helpful to have had a book by someone more capable of a critical survey.

We are given, in fact, a picture of a pleasant family who work hard enough without being unduly burdened by the profundity of the issues they help to decide. It is only when Sir John Tilley tells us that the reorganisation of 1905–6 brought into being a mysterious entity called The Office that we begin to realise that the eminent officials of the Department are not simple clay in the hands of the supreme potter, the Foreign Secretary. It is, in fact, clear to any reader of the War Documents that men like the late Lord Carnock, like Sir Eyre Crowe, and Lord Tyrrell, have been as powerful in their influence as most ministers, and that their method of conducting their Department prevented anything like that effective scrutiny of their policy possible in France or the United States. Our methods may be the best ; but at least it would be helpful to have a reasoned defence of them.

Nor will the interested reader find out what he wants to know upon such important matters as appointment and promotion. Were the criticisms passed by the MacDonnell Commission in 1914 justified ? Is it really an answer to Mr. Nightingale's remarkable analysis of Foreign Office personnel to say, as Sir John Tilley says, that Eton men are not, after all, a uniform type ? Is the diplomat *de carrière* as successful in the special embassies like Washington or Moscow as the *ad hoc* appointment of an eminent outsider ? Can a Foreign Secretary really make his impact upon

policy unless, like Mr. Henderson, he brings his own private team of experts into the Department while he is there? What principles, if any, govern the relations between the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister? Is it office experience, for instance, that a conference like the Naval Conference of 1929 needs the virtual supersession of the Foreign Secretary by his political chief? We are told something of the habits of the Crown when Queen Victoria ruled; discretion covers the later period with silence. But the place of the Crown in foreign affairs is a matter upon which a book of this kind ought to throw some light.

A final word ought to be said on the bibliography. This is reduced to such narrow limits that a student who relied upon it for his information would get nothing but scrappy gossip apart from two brief American treatises. There exists, of course, in fact a much more considerable literature than is here listed. The bibliography is an accurate index to the book. Its authors decided to be amusing where they had the opportunity to illuminate. Is their attitude a symptom of what the Foreign Office thinks the public should know about its affairs? H. J. L.

NORMAN AND ARAB

William the Conqueror. By HILAIRE BELLOC. *Peter Davies.* 5s.

Harun al Rashid. By H. ST. JOHN PHILBY. *Peter Davies.* 5s.

One always opens a new book by Mr. Belloc with an anticipation of enjoyment which is never disappointed, but always too with some apprehension of an *amari aliquid* which is apt to be justified. One expects (and gets) well-articulated knowledge, clarity, and what for want of a better term may be called a philosophy. But what one also expects (and probably gets) is a rasping quality of mind, as if one were listening to a veteran classical master, embittered by forty years' failure to get boys to understand (let us say) the exact force of ἄν with the indicative. Can it be that this irritability (which, mind you, Mr. Belloc always keeps marvellously in control so that he never actually boxes your ears) is due to a chronic spiritual conflict? Is it because he has all his life been trying to live in two cultures, French and English, and excel in both? Is there any other way of explaining the curious duplicity of his style? When he follows his instinct, which is French, he writes admirable nervous English; but every now and again he seems to have a sudden qualm and say "*Sapristi*, but am I not a Sussex man?" And straightway drops into "Bellockese"—a stilted manner that might suggest to anyone who did not know of the author's impeccable Roman orthodoxy that it has been derived from surreptitious perusings of the Authorised Version of the New Testament.

However, there is not too much "Bellockese" in *William the Conqueror*—it occurs chiefly in irritating turns of phrase—and after a jarring bit of modern journalese by way of opening paragraph, we are soon enjoying Mr. Belloc at his best. Of course he has a thesis—or rather a series of theses. *Imprimis*, that the Norman Conquest was not a conquest at all. *Item*, that William in the nature of things was bound to become King of England, and that if Edward the Confessor had not been such an unconscionable time in dying, there would have been no Hastings and no fuss. *Item*, that William was a better man than Harold any day, and that from the English point of view there was not much to choose between a Norman and an Englishman under Danish influence. These and other matters are argued with Mr. Belloc's usual skill. He is anxious to convince us that William was a more devout son of the Church than Harold, but here his chariots drive heavily. An excellent short account of the origins of the feudal system is marred by a rather cross-grained attempt to prove that there was no such thing as national sentiment in the eleventh century. There was. But the tactical exposition of the Battle of Hastings is beyond praise.

Mr. St. John Philby's *Harun al Rashid* is as a matter of course competent and learned, but more the latter than the former. Unlike Mr. Belloc he has not acquired the art of carrying his learning lightly, with the result that the reader gets a great deal (in highly concentrated form) about the rise and decline of the Abbassides, but is left at the end wondering where Harun al Rashid comes in. An historical conscience is a good thing so long as it does not make a coward of the historian. Mr. Philby is so afraid of the legendary Harun that he will not attempt to explain why he became legendary, which is the one thing the reader wants to know. DONALD CARSWELL

TRADERS OF THE SAHARAN DESERT

Caravans of the Old Sahara. By E. W. BOVILL. *Oxford University Press.* 21s.

The International Institute of African Languages and Cultures has laid all students of the history of commerce, as well as all who are interested in Africa, under an obligation by publishing Mr. Bovill's history of the Western Sudan. We know a good deal about the North African littoral, both in the Roman era and after the Arab conquest, and the trade between Christian Europe and the Mohammedan states of the coast was one of the basic trades of the Middle Ages. But few people realise, as Mr. Bovill points out, the extent to which that trade depended on the desert caravan traffic with the negroid peoples of the Western Sudan, and fewer still know anything at all about the Empires which rose and fell in that shadowy land, the fusion of settled agriculturists with nomads of the desert which created its racial types, and the ties of blood and culture woven by the trans-Saharan trade between the peoples of the North and South of the desert. Mr. Bovill desires to win "a measure of recognition for the part which the Western Sudanese have played in the history of civilisation," and he has made an enthralling book of it.

The *leit motif* of the story is trade, that traffic across the desert which, from the dawn of history until the end of the eighteenth century, followed almost unchanged the same immemorial caravan routes. These three great roads, each about two months' journey for a camel caravan, ran from Taghaza to Timbuktu, from Ghadames to Air and from Fezzan to Kewar. The carrying trade was in the hands of the camel-driving Taureg, desert nomads who controlled the roads, dug and maintained the desert wells and secured the pastures. If the Negroid races were open to the influences of Mediterranean culture, and if the mercantile communities of the Western world had access to the wealth of the interior of Africa, it was due to the Taureg. Their activities made of the Sahara not a barrier but a highway, and the flourishing *entrepôts* of the interior, Timbuktu, Kano, Jega and other towns, owed their prosperity largely to their position on the caravan routes.

The great mainstay of Saharan trade was the exchange of gold for salt. It was the fabled gold of the interior which roused the greed of Moorish and European traders and inspired the famous ruler of Morocco in the days of Queen Elizabeth to undertake the conquest of the Negrolands. El Mansur won for himself the title of "El Dzehebi," "the Golden," but the mines themselves were beyond the reach of the invaders, lying as they did in Wangara, Bonduku and Ashanti. From these all through mediaeval and modern times gold came to the *entrepôts* on the Sudanese end of the routes, and in return the caravans brought among other things the urgently needed salt; in some places (travellers averred) men would exchange gold against an equal weight of it. In the Western Sudan there are hardly any natural saltpans, and up to the end of the sixteenth century the countries of the middle Niger were almost wholly dependent on the saltpans of Taghaza, until after 1585 the Taodeni mines began to be worked. Mr. Bovill gives a vivid description of the gigantic salt caravan called the *Azalai*, which set out every autumn from Air to bring salt from Bilma in the Kawar oasis; as recently as 1908, when it was in its decline, it numbered 20,000 camels. He describes, too, the miserable lot of the salt-diggers of Taghaza, whose position to-day seems to be very much what it was when Leo Africanus wrote of them, "neither have the said diggers of salt any victuals but such as the merchants bring unto them . . . inasmuch that oftentimes they perish for lacke of foode, whenas the merchants come not in due time unto them." He notes that as recently as 1910 fifty-six people died of starvation at Taodeni, owing to the failure of a caravan to arrive in time to save them. The Taghaza-Timbuktu and Ghadames-Air roads owed their importance to salt and gold, but the Fezzan-Kewar route (which was the old Roman road from the Garamantes to the "blameless Aethiopians") was chiefly used for the slave trade, and was strewn with human skeletons. Only the most robust of these wretched creatures survived the desert march; and only about 10 per cent. survived the surgical operation demanded by the traffic in eunuchs, which was "a particularly hideous branch of the slave trade of the interior." Yet few competent observers have failed to admit that the horrors of the trans-Saharan slave traffic were surpassed by those of the "Middle Passage" in the days of the European trade between Guinea and the West Indies. The abolition of the slave trade

was one of the causes of the decay of the trans-Saharan caravan routes, for the oases depended on slave labour to hold back the encroaching desert, and when negro labour became more difficult to secure, the Sahara crept in. Moreover the competition of sea-borne trade was fatal to these routes, once the interior had been thrown open from the Guinea coast; and it was about the same time that European salt began to flood the Sudanese market. Then "through human neglect the sterility of the Sahara became more profound than ever before, and the ties which for countless ages had bound Barbary to the Western Sudan were for ever broken."

Into this story of a great trade Mr. Bovill has woven an exceptionally interesting account of African discovery. Our sole knowledge of these lands during the Middle Ages is due to a series of Arabic writers, notably to two great fourteenth-century men of letters, the traveller Ibn Battuta and the historian Ibn Khaldun, culminating in the remarkable Moor of Granada who in the sixteenth century won for himself the title of Leo Africanus. But to Europeans the interior of Africa remained "the dark continent" until the nineteenth century. While a series of intrepid travellers moved along the great routes of Asia in the thirteenth century, Africa lacked its Marco Polo, and in spite of the Portuguese voyages which opened the Western coastline, the discovery of the interior really only began with the foundation of the African Association and the travels of Mungo Park in the last years of the eighteenth century. This apathy in exploration seems to have been due less to physical difficulties than to the indifference of Europeans, when the opening of the road to India and China tempted them with greater wealth than the fabled gold-mines of Wangara, and to the rise of the Barbary pirates, which broke the peaceful relations which had prevailed for centuries between Europe and Northern Africa. The slave trade, too, largely accounted for the failure to penetrate from the coast of Guinea, for it filled the peoples of the interior with a bitter hatred of the white man, while the coastal chiefs were determined to keep the middleman's profit in their own hands.

There is no space in which to discuss what is perhaps the most novel part of Mr. Bovill's book, his careful account of the political history of the Western Sudan. An interesting element is the predominance of the Mandingoes, a black Sonninke people, who absorbed the mysterious white dynasty of Ghana, built up the great empire of Mali, which received recognition far beyond the shores of Africa, and produced the brilliant house of the Askias. Mr. Bovill thinks that they owed their remarkable qualities largely to their nomadic Zaghawa blood. Altogether this book is to be highly recommended both to the scholar and to the general reader interested in Africa; the author obviously knows not only the authorities on the Western Sudan but the country itself from the inside, and has written an admirable introduction to its history.

EILEEN POWER

THE SPECTRE OF WAR

War Unless —— By SISLEY HUDDLESTON. *Gollancz.* 5s.

Peace and War. By GULIELMO FERRERO. Translated by BERTHA PRITCHARD. *Macmillan.* 8s. 6d.

Two books come simultaneously from the press, burdened by the presage of an impending war. Professor Ferrero is the philosophic historian, trained to see the life of nations over great reaches of time, with a century for his unit. Mr. Huddleston is the accomplished journalist, whose professional task it has been for fourteen years to watch the events of the day. Both are mastered by the same fear; the historian because he deduces war as the immanent principle of our present international life; the journalist, because he can name a dozen possible causes of it, because he has watched at close range the futilities of statesmen, and because experience has made him scornful and sceptical of the value of paper pacts and the Genevan League. Both call for a revision of the Peace Treaties. Both rely on the dictatorship of the Great Powers to bring it about, though Mr. Huddleston insists that America and Great Britain must lead.

The analysis of the facts is the more impressive part of Mr. Huddleston's book. He knows them as well as any man now living, and he sets them out in some chapters of vigorous and arresting writing. He draws, too, on his friends, and one of them contributes a terrifying yet soberly accurate picture of the Balkans. Mr. Huddleston sets out deliberately to alarm us: he is a conscientious "scaremonger." He scoffs amusingly at the "pacts," which are, as he puts it, a mere "inflation" of the diplomatic currency. His criticism of the League is less happy: the flaws in that structure are more fundamental than those that he detects. He does not commit himself to a precise prediction as to whether war will overwhelm us in two or in five years: enough that it is coming—that Hitler's arrival in power brought it in sight, unless. . . .

Unless the Peace Treaties are revised, promptly, drastically and as a whole. Who doubts it? But Mr. Huddleston, sharply critical of the ineffectiveness of American foreign policy in the past, loses all grip of reality when he demands that the United States shall join with Great Britain in imposing revision on Europe. Omit that eccentricity in the recipe for salvation and it is difficult to see that what is left differs appreciably from the Four-Power Pact, which France and the Little Entente have already reduced to virtual nullity. Nor, if this difficulty could be overcome, does he face the new obstacle to any territorial revision, that it must mean placing millions of Poles and Austrians under Nazi rule. So we confront the dilemma: not to revise is to leave a now dynamic and reckless Germany with an adequate motive for war; to revise is to extend the area of barbarism. Mr. Huddleston has done good service in warning us against the danger of drifting, inaction, and pacifist illusions, but no more than others has he found a clear road to peace.

Professor Ferrero has written some thought-provoking essays, but he does not pretend to guide us through the perplexities of the moment. The ablest and most important of the series is a brilliantly written contrast between the limited wars of the eighteenth century, and the unlimited wars of our time. Then, small mercenary armies fought by scientific manoeuvres for limited ends; neither side claimed absolute right; it was unnecessary to stir a nation to passion; one did not hate the enemy, and the ideal of the strategist was war without battles, as Marshal Saxe put it. Now, war engages the whole forces of a nation to destroy those of the enemy; it must create a fanatical myth, and, if it ends in defeat, it will also end in revolution. If there is no monarchy to destroy, then the *bourgeoisie* will go under. Incidentally there is an interesting argument to the effect that Socialism is primarily a reaction against war. The conclusion is

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an amusingly moderate plea for fifty years of assured peace in Europe—for Ferrero will not say that war is always useless or avoidable. An essay on monarchy argues that the Allies ought to have understood that the revolutions in Berlin and Vienna meant the belated triumph in Central Europe of the principles of the French Revolution, and smiled on them. It is an unexpected, original book, the work of a fine nineteenth-century mind, at once liberal and Christian. The best things in it, perhaps, are the whimsical dialogues with Americans that conclude it. The translation is admirably done. H. N. B.

THE "LOST GENERATION"

Testament of Youth. By VERA BRITTAIN. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

If civilisation is reborn after wars to end war have ended it, the historian will find much to interest him in Miss Brittain's record of the last European war with a limited firing-line. The feelings of literary critics do not matter when a book is well enough timed. There are already war books which, by virtue of intelligence, a sensitive style or an original point of view, scramble into the category of literature, and a few which throw some light on soldiers; this is the first which describes fully and accurately the typical reaction of the vigorous provincial young woman. In the circumstances criticism can wait.

Miss Brittain took up residence at Somerville, which then represented the height of her ambition, at the beginning of the war. She emerged from the petty civilities of Buxton into the intellectual sunshine of Oxford only to find her ambitions had been shorn of their glory by a "Serbian bomb hurled from the other end of Europe at an Austrian archduke." After a year of study, Oxford felt like a backwater. Her brother and his two school-friends, one of whom was the sun of her universe, had joined up. Reacting at first with impatience, she tackled the situation with characteristic energy, dropped history for nursing and served throughout the war in England, France and Malta, with a single break when the real and imaginary needs of her family, formerly omnipotent, then just tiresomely pathetic, reclaimed her. It is natural that overtaxed youth should have scorned the food-card provincialism of its elders. Miss Brittain has little that is revealing to say about the civilian front; there are few extracts from civilian letters apart from those about the soldier sons. Her hospital experience is more clearly recalled, with its shocks and fatigues, its *camaraderie*, its jealousies and its red tape. Courtship, friendships and shattering bereavements under the all-prevailing shadow make poignant reading. All the three school-friends were killed, though Miss Brittain's musician brother survived until June 1918. Through the medium of diaries and letters it is possible to watch the attitude of the soldiers change from confident idealism to scepticism on the one hand and a more primitive type of belief on the other. The young poet whose sensitive and ambitious personality colours the first part of the book received extreme unction from a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, which he had joined unknown to his family, and the wounded Tommies surviving the 1918 Putsch babbled about the ghosts of dead comrades. An equally typical development was the male equivalent of:

> "Hug me, kiss me, call me Gertie,
> Marry me quick, I'm nearly thirty."

"An inexplicable sense of urgency" (was it inexplicable?) "led . . . to a greedy grasping after the second-rate lest the first-rate should never materialise." After the Armistice Miss Brittain takes us back to 1919 Oxford, in which war experience was rapidly becoming *démodé*, although its consequences were to be seen in the successful battle for women's degrees. The "lost generation," which could share its thoughts only with the dead, finds an angry apologist in this part. The remaining chapters describe post-war Europe, which the author explored with Winifred Holtby, and recapitulate her struggles as L.N.U. lecturer and journalist. The book concludes with her marriage in 1925.

War disillusion has been followed by disillusion with the chances of peace. In *Testament of Youth*, Miss Brittain's energetic pacifism is clouded a little by her concern to vindicate the sufferers against later generations intent on forgetting. The book will find a readier response for that reason. The loneliness of men and women who endured the war and have found no counter-balancing good in the peace will be soothed by sharing her memories. Not that she romanticises events. Hers is a plain, straightforward record which will be useful to historians long after the public has forgotten it. From the literary point of view it lacks economy of style and distinction of thought, and, more serious, a sense of humour which may give an immortal twist to the commonplace. It is a book of the day without the qualities which make for literary survival; but if civilisation begins again and the psychological history of the war comes to be written, it will prove an invaluable source-book.

RABELAIS

Laughter for Pluto. A Book about Rabelais. By FRANCIS WATSON. *Lovat Dickson.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Last year, in a witty first novel, Mr. Francis Watson proved that he had read his Rabelais with enthusiasm, and the fantastic adventures of his modern lovers among the gigantic characters of the master may even have proved educative to the novel-reading public. With undiminished zest Mr. Watson endeavours now to introduce Rabelais to the masses, but it is obvious that he has found the task more difficult than it seemed in contemplation. The thundering, pot-walloping ex-monk is an embarrassing guest in a drawing-room, and Mr. Watson cannot forget the stares of the Victorians. Maupassant is now respectable, for his stories can be purchased at Woolworths; but Rabelais still awaits in the medical stores, cheek by jowl with old Aristotle "and the latest purveyor of hints to the hastily married." No doubt Rabelais has proved a bewildering personage to Mr. Linger-after-lust, but the respectability of Select Libraries has not saved him from secret anthologists. Mr. Watson is disturbed by his own experience, which is not very remarkable: "I even remember having come upon a public library copy of W. F. Smith's translation of Rabelais, which was embellished with pencilled observations such as 'see page 253,' or 'This is good,' for the direction of ardent students of erotica to whom dog-eared pages and dirty thumb-marks might not be sufficient guides."

Mr. Watson is also anxious not to frighten away the theologically sensitive, and he resorts to a little harmless guile. In the last

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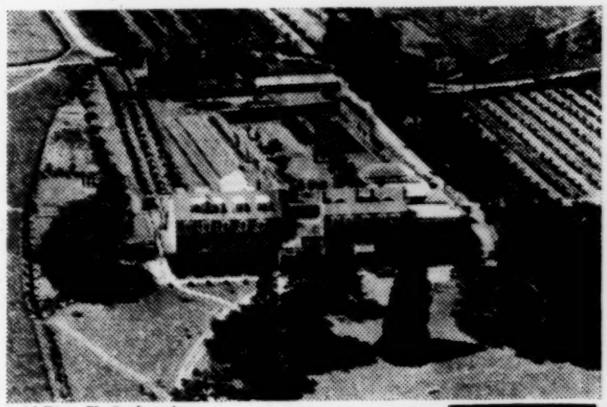

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chapter of his biography he says: "With the intention of correcting a widespread misconception I have allowed myself to say more than once that Rabelais was not an atheist. It would perhaps have been better if I had said that his work does not show atheistic opinions. But, on the other hand, I feared that to accept Rabelais's atheism without question at the outset might lose *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel* a number of otherwise appreciative readers, for there is a curiously sinister ring about the word 'atheism' which might echo somewhat dismally in the midst of Pluto's laughter." Mr. Watson's own laughter is as hollow at times as that of a lecturer, who sees a row of blank faces before him when he perpetrates a carefully planned joke. But he cannot be completely blamed for this. It is difficult to describe the gargantuan mirth of Rabelais to an imponderable audience, and the attempt may easily decline into mere facetiousness.

Mr. Watson, however, makes a laudable attempt to serve up Rabelais to masses who have no corresponding world of their own and prefer desiccated extracts and vitamins to beefsteaks. He brightens his chapter-heads and gives us "Horizon-Fever," "The King of the Carnival," and "What a Young Man Should Know." The last title refers to the famous chapter on cuckoldry, a subject unknown to this age of divorce-courts; and Mr. Watson furnishes us with an amusing account of the cornute myth. At times he finds modern instance for his quotations. "Printing," declared Gargantua, "is now in use, so elegant, and so correct, that better cannot be imagined, although it was found out but in my time by divine inspiration, as by a diabolical suggestion on the other side was the invention of Ordnance."

Mr. Watson adds: "We have to wait till the twentieth century for a storm of indignation to be aroused because a supposedly intellectual institution such as an ancient University has the temerity to raise its voice against the uses of gunpowder."

Mr. Watson has an engaging thesis, for he attempts to rout the scholars who have hidden the mirth of Rabelais under tomes of pedantic commentary. He lacks the last reward of experience and cannot hide his indignation by universal mockery. The best chapter in his book deals with Etienne Dolet, the publisher of Rabelais, who was burned at the stake for a three-word footnote to his edition of Plato. In an age when we are inclined to forget the long struggle for mental freedom and to dally with notions of ecclesiasticism, Mr. Watson's indignation is worthy.

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The Art of Living. By OSBERT BURDETT. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7s. 6d.

Saunterer's Rewards. By E. V. LUCAS. *Methuen.* 6s.

The methods of Mr. Burdett and Mr. Lucas are poles asunder. Mr. Lucas saunters comfortably, alert to discover and communicate the agreeable; Mr. Burdett struts austerely, nicely conducting a clouded cane to point out the shortcomings of a world that has lost its aristocratic savour, or unbends condescendingly to inform the non-Tory mind what it misses. To Mr. Lucas the art of living is just to be alive in and to a world packed with interest for the discerning. To Mr. Burdett it is a ritual to be hardly acquired and punctiliously performed. Mr. Lucas bids us be at ease. Mr. Burdett orders us to sit up and take notice. Both have a way with them, and so have their way with us.

In *The Art of Living* Mr. Burdett does not so much formulate a theory as infer a theory from examples; and as his range is a wide one, stretching from an essay on Fifth of November bonfires and pageantry at Lewes to a recondite argument, in the form of a duologue, on the meaning of the title of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, from thoughts on the corset—particularly as worn by cavalry men and Elizabethan gallants—to a charming appreciation of Lowes Dickinson, we can construct the theory for ourselves. The good life is to be lived in a world of good taste, a mannered world rooted in tradition, a world informed by the spirits of Sir Thomas Browne, Dr. Johnson, the Chesterfield of the Letters to his son, Edmund Burke, William Cobbett, Sir Francis Burdett, George Borrow, Coventry Patmore and Nathaniel Hawthorne; a world that delights in wine, in lineage, in fine manners and in distinguished surroundings, but is not so helpless that it cannot make good in a flat.

Mr. Lucas has no theories to cramp his style, no art of living to cramp his life. He saunters as the whim or accident of the moment leads him. The tomb of the Lady Elizabeth Culpepper, in Hollingbourne Church, leads him to the Culpepper records, to Catharine Howard, to Nicholas the herbalist, and to that Culpepper who "rode on a flea-bitten fiddle-faced grey" and "always shook hands with the Parson and Squire." Thereafter he takes us far afield. One of the most attractive of the essays is that on Quintius Curtius, apropos of Haydon's spirited picture of that hero leaping into the chasm which Mr. Lucas first saw when it hung in Gatti's in Villiers Street. A photogravure of the picture forms the frontispiece of the book, and is curiously suggestive of Ingres, so adding to the pathos of Haydon's tragic failure. In "My Favourite Painter" Mr. Lucas gives us an agreeable appreciation of Corot. (But was not Vermeer once his favourite?) A firework display at the Crystal Palace takes us to Whistler's "Falling Rocket," and Ruskin and the famous trial. So we saunter on, and nowhere is there any sign that Mr. Lucas's hand has lost its cunning.

SHORTER NOTICES

A Last Elizabethan Journal. 1599—1603. By G. B. HARRISON. *Constable.* 21s.

This volume completes one of the most ingenious and successful essays in intimate history that literature has given us. It is the supreme merit of the Journal that we are concerned not with dead records of what has happened, but with living and lively accounts, adapted imaginatively from contemporary documents, of what is happening. Dr. Harrison sets his scene firmly in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, and, taking his stand there, relives for us and with us the life of the England that Shakespeare knew. The diary form in which the Journal is cast gives such well-known stories as the disgrace, rebellion, trial and death of Essex, a curious freshness and immediacy; and the final scenes in which are described the relations of Elizabeth with her last Parliament, and the gradually failing powers of the ageing Queen, affect the reader with something of the poignancy that those who surrounded her must have felt. Again, interspersed with this larger history of the Spanish Expedition to Ireland and the war with Tyrone, the war in the Lowlands, and the internal religious quarrels, we have that same yearly and monthly record of new books printed and new plays performed, which from its inception has made the Journal so valuable to the student. And through it all ripples and swirls the current stream of talk, the gossip, racy of the time.

The Golden Book of Italian Poetry. Chosen and edited by LAURO DE BOSIS. With a Foreword by PROF. G. M. TREVELYAN, O.M. *Oxford University Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This anthology, one may suspect, owes the distinction of its Foreword principally to the editor's Shelleyan character and romantic fate. But it is, on its own merits, quite worthy of such an introduction to the English reader. The opening survey of Italian Literature is perhaps as good as anything could be in the space, and the selection of poems is representative and sympathetic.

The Progress of Man: A Short Survey of His Evolution, His Customs and His Works. By A. M. HOCART. *Methuen.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Hocart is so modest in his preface that a little dogmatism in the work itself may be forgiven him. For Mr. Hocart is of the school of anthropologists who holds that man from the beginning and particularly in the beginning of his history was no rationalist, but did things and invented things not so much from a utilitarian point of view as from the point of view of one beset by the bogies of his imagination, born of dreams, premonitions, and, perhaps, an impaired digestion. And when a member of that school admits that he is not infallible, there is hope for us all. Allowing for this too-emphatic insistence on the irrational (non-utilitarian) nature of primitive man's behaviour, Mr. Hocart has probably summarised as well as our present knowledge permits the progress of man from the dawn to to-day; and, if a little drastic in his treatment of anthropological and pre-historical method generally, his summary will at any rate enable the student to pick his way amid the mass of fact and theory that has collected since Tylor surveyed human evolution half a century ago. The book is well documented and every chapter is followed by a bibliography.

About Motoring

THE TRIUMPH GLORIA SIX

THE Triumph Company, largely inspired by two directors who happened to be of German origin, once rendered British trade a very signal service indeed. The manufacture and use of motor cycles were vanishing from the land, killed by inferior imported designs and goods, supplemented by worse British imitations of continental ideas. Nearly thirty years ago the Triumph factory, governed by Messrs. Schulte and Bettmann, conceived the idea of turning out motor cycles equal in quality to the pedal cycles for which Coventry was already famous. Their methods were honest and sound; their policy conservative. Within a very few years they built up an extremely profitable business for themselves, and stimulated other factories to imitate their plans. More than any other concern they deserve the credit for the vast sums which the British motor cycle has earned, the labour which it has employed, the pleasure it has given, and the prestige which it enjoys all over the world. A switch to the manufacture of cars came very late in the firm's history, and was practically compulsory. Their quondam motor cycle customers demanded a Triumph car as rising incomes enabled them to graduate to four wheels; and their proud agents yearned to handle a car of the same stuff as their excellent motor cycles. But the firm tried to "muscle in" (as Chicago gangsters have it) at a date when car design was stereotyped and car affinities between trade and public were already established. They have built and sold many good cars, but they have never yet won quite the position in the car world which they enjoyed for so many decades in the motor cycle sphere. When prices are cut to the bone, and over-production is the rule, and design is stabilised, it is next to impossible for any new car to score shattering successes. Nor do I hope that the Triumph car will reach the dignity of a cult until the factory either snatches a six months' lead of its rivals or hits on a body which captivates public fancy. It is quite as difficult to devise a best-seller car as it is to write a best-selling novel. Neither author nor publisher guessed that *If Winter Comes* would be a *succès fou*. Neither did the Riley Company suppose that their Monaco saloon body would make their fortunes, nor the Wolseley people foresee the ravenous demand for their little Hornets. Of the Triumph lines for 1934 the "Gloria Six" is the most attractive, but possibly does not exhibit sufficient originality to start a run. It is a quite extremely good-looking type of the special size which so many people choose nowadays. Taxed at no more than £13, it has a 9ft. 8in. wheelbase, and an engine which is efficient without showing too close a kinship to the racing breed. These figures are eloquent to an experienced owner. Too short a base spells discomfort for the passengers. Too high a power output implies exasperating ownership. When terrific power is generated from a tiny engine, maintenance becomes exacting. The tappet clearances must be set to a hair. The gas distribution, possibly effected by three carburetters, becomes disturbed at each decarbonisation, and is not too easily restored. So a power unit of medium efficiency makes for peace, just as a long wheelbase makes for comfort. But with this specification one requires a really light body which is also tough. Otherwise, the weight kills acceleration and climb, or if weight be cut ruthlessly, too light a body soon generates noises. On all these scores the Gloria Six strikes a very sane and happy compromise; and it is on the precise balance of judgment involved in all these decisions that its chance of fame pivots. It is a good car; if sufficient owners lose their hearts to its carefully planned balance of pros and cons it may soon rank as an exceptionally good car—possibly even the best of its price and size. This balance in design, coupled with high intrinsic quality and handsome looks, constitutes the spear-point of its appeal.

For the rest, it is not unlike a number of rivals. The gear-changing bogy in this instance is killed by the free wheel system, with which remote control is combined. Vibration is excluded by the popular three-point rubber mounting, with a pair of stabilisers, and extreme precision in the actual mechanical balancing of the power unit. As already emphasised, the power output is of the medium range, furnishing perhaps 65 m.p.h. on the highest of the four forward ratios. It is possible to extract 75 m.p.h. from engines of this size, but only at the price of fussy maintenance and increased fuel consumption, a price which the majority of owners refuse to pay. The ground clearance is less than seven inches, so that unusual stability is ensured, together with a minimum wind resistance and some weight reduction. According to a standard Triumph policy, permanent jacking for all four wheels is included in the very reasonable list price, a convenience which ought to be universal, but is still rare, and especially rare in this price field (the standard Gloria saloon is listed at no more than £325). Owners who tour abroad, or even in the Highlands, will note with approval that the water circulation is by pump. Additional speed is obtainable at a higher price, but is not recommended for the average owner.

Interior comfort is good, perhaps especially for the two front occupants, whose thighs receive better support from sloped cushions than is common in this class. The rear seats are flatter,

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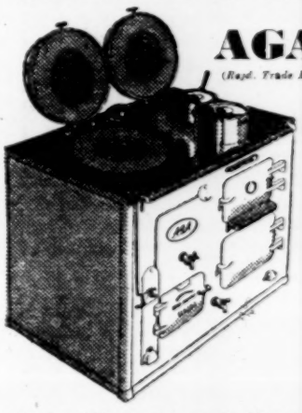

"To anyone living in the depths of the country," writes an Aga Owner, "often leaving the house empty all day, it is an absolute god-send"—because the Aga is 100% safe, never goes out and is always ready for immediate cooking. "This week," writes another Aga Owner, "we have 12 in dining-room, 9 servants, 3 in nursery and besides all this we had a dance for 130 people." So you see the Aga, in spite of its amazing fuel cost, is a full-sized cooking range. And another Owner delights us by saying, "Now that I have tried the Aga Cooker I am quite confident in saying that it fulfils every representation made in your Catalogue and possibly more."

We would like to send you our 24-page Fully Illustrated Booklet. The Aga Cooker is really rather a wonderful invention—but in the compass of our advertisement it is impossible to tell you as much about it as you would probably like to know. Please address your card or letter to

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THE ONLY COOKING STOVE IN THE WORLD WITH A GUARANTEED FUEL CONSUMPTION

but have pneumatic upholstery. The gear box of the screen wipers is completely concealed in the lower framing of the screen, instead of obstructing the vision and creating an eyesore. (Some day a genius may give us a wiper which is genuinely silent, and which waggles so fast that it does not irritate the eyes; but there is no sign of it as yet.) The steering wheel is spring-spoked, so that no hammering of the wrists occurs in long journeys at a fast speed; this fault is very pronounced with many 1933 cars. Entry is easy, thanks to the underslung frame and low floor level; but care must be taken not to wound the shins with the sharp corners of the front doors, which are steeply sloped from front to back, as on too many cars of this class. The fault is possibly inseparable from the low roofs, which compel one to enter by sitting down backwards and lifting the feet in afterwards. The front of the car is of the eddy-free type, with no projections to produce wind roaring; and the tail is very smartly and pleasantly sloped. Quite the most attractive Triumph yet built.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 38.—THE RIPOSTE CLUB

Nine men turned up at the Riposte Club for a friendly competition which had been arranged to decide who should represent the Club in the Parry Shield Competition. It was decided to divide them into two pools of four and five, each man fencing in turn against each other in his pool. Under the rules of the Club the winner in any match was the one who first obtained four hits in seven rounds if he was a member of the four pool, and three hits in five rounds if he was a member of the five pool, while as between the two pools the winner of the pool who had been hit fewer times than the winner of the other pool was adjudged to be the winner of the whole competition. There would be a fight-off in the case of a tie between the two winners.

It was also decided that Rapier and Foyle, who had represented the Club in previous years, should fence in different pools. Each of them was confident that, while he might have some hard bouts, he would be the winner of his pool. Rapier won the toss which gave him the right to decide which pool he would join.

ASSUMING THAT THE CONFIDENCE OF RAPIER AND FOYLE WAS NOT MISPLACED, BUT THAT OTHERWISE NOTHING IS KNOWN ABOUT THE FORM OF THEIR OPPONENTS, WHICH POOL SHOULD RAPIER ELECT TO JOIN TO GIVE HIM THE BETTER CHANCE OF REPRESENTING THE CLUB, AND IF HE JOINS THIS POOL WHAT ARE THE ODDS AGAINST FOYLE OF A CLEAR WIN WITHOUT THE NECESSITY OF A FIGHT-OFF?

PROBLEM 26.—MENDACIA

Sixty-six electors voted for the President in 1923.

The Problem resolves itself into finding ten pairs of numbers whose sum is less than 275 and the difference between whose squares is constant.

The following numbers are the constant differences between the squares of seven sets of ten numbers which satisfy this condition:

1,440 = 240 . 6
2,880 = 240 . 12
3,360 = 240 . 14
4,320 = 270 . 16
5,040 = 252 . 20
6,720 = 240 . 8
10,080 = 252 . 40

Now clearly the number here required is that of which one factor approaches most nearly to 275, *i.e.*, 4,320.

Hence the following table can be constructed:

Year.	Electors.	For.	Against.	Votes for.	Votes agst.
1932	270	143	127	20,449	16,129
1931	240	129	111	16,641	12,321
1930	216	118	98	13,924	9,604
1929	180	102	78	10,404	6,084
1928	144	87	57	7,569	3,249
1927	120	78	42	6,084	1,764
1926	108	74	34	5,476	1,156
1925	90	69	21	4,761	441
1924	80	67	13	4,489	169
1923	72	66	6	4,356	36

I am surprised to receive several claims of "No solution."

PROBLEM 35.—BARBARA'S TEA PARTY

A set of Low's cartoons goes to Felix Aylmer, 8 The Mount, Heath Street, Hampstead, N.W.3.

DATA FOR PROBLEMS 32–35

	Correct answers.	Incorrect answers.	Points awarded.
32	26	17	8
33	42	5	7
34	40	1	6
35	70	4	7

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

One set of Low's cartoons is awarded weekly to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition a record is kept of the names of senders of all correct solutions submitted. All solvers qualify for book prizes on a cumulative-point basis. For particulars see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of May 6th.

Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this office not later than the next Tuesday but one after the date of publication.

PALINDROMIC WORD SQUARES

A fascinating exercise is the construction (in English) of word-squares on the lines of the famous

S A T O R
A R E P O
T E N E T
O P E R A
R O T A S

Here is an example. The sentence SENILE? NOT I! NO, SON, I TONE LINES which means very little but, in an appropriate context, could be taken as a defence of cosmetics, can be set out as:

S E N I L
E N O T I
N O S O N
I T O N E
L I N E S

and so read in four different ways. Trinculo will give three copies of the *Week End Problems Book* for the best word-squares submitted by September 30th.

CALIBAN

"But what made you so sure he was innocent?"

"You will remember that I examined our host's bathroom. I found there a purple tube of shaving cream and recently-used shaving materials. That decided the matter."

"You amaze me Holmes," said I, "surely you are—"

"My dear Watson" interrupted Holmes impatiently, "You are singularly obtuse this morning. As you know, I later discovered that the deed was committed just before breakfast—the time when shaving has put irritable men into a mood of violence. But I saw our friend was accustomed to use Parke-Davis Shaving Cream. He also had a good brush and keen razor blades. His shaving would therefore be a pleasure—he could not fail to be in a good humour before breakfast. In such a mood it was impossible for him to commit a crime."

"You are wonderful," I cried, "Your merits like those of Parke-Davis Shaving Cream should be publicly recognised."

* * *

If shaving makes you feel murderous, you need Parke-Davis Shaving Cream. Buy a tube from your Chemist for 1/6; or send for a free sample from Box 119/33, Euthymol, 50, Beak Street, London W.1

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This is addressed to the large company of seasoned shavers who find their present razors barely adequate to cope with a tough beard firmly embedded in a tender skin.

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(Madam—if your inquisitiveness has taken you so far, go one step further and spend the requisite guinea on your man. Or at least persuade him to go to the nearest dealer and ask for a Ronson on trial. Failing this, tell him to write for an illustrated folder to Ronson Products Ltd., Manfield House, Strand, London, W.C.2.)

Of course you use a Ronson Lighter?

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